



Martial God

武神

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Martial God is a completed eastern fantasy novel on Qidian.

Synopsis :

What is a genius? Capable of comprehending any battle skill regardless of the skill itself and sweeping away the bottlenecks while cultivating a new technique; this is a true genius! He Yiming was originally an ordinary youngster in He family estate with not too extraordinary aptitude in learning martial arts. However, after a fortuitous encounter, this ordinary youngster became what people refer to as genius in a single leap. Possessing an aptitude for learning martial arts which could leave people in awe, regardless of whether it's his clan's Houtian Scripture of Five Phases or various Xiantian scriptures of legends, regardless of whether it's mental techniques or battle skills, he can comprehend it all in its entirety at a frightening speed. Martial God, with martial as name, using the most simple and direct approach, thrives!

Info :

<http://www.novelupdates.com/series/martial-god/>

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Book 1 - What Is A Genius

Chapter 1 - He Family's Sixth Son

At the beginning of the cosmos, Yin and Yang, the two mutually correspondent vital energies, gave birth to the boundless heavens, land and all the matter.

Yin and Yang shuttle about in the cosmic space and congeals into all kinds of laws. It is said that all the matter will return back to Yin and Yang.

The night was deep. Suddenly, countless stars emerged in the sky, shining brightly and twinkling relentlessly.

Under an incomplete night moon, a youngster was performing the horse stance on a hillside. The youngster's eyes were tranquil and his vision was focussed at his front.

Maintaining this kind of posture is extremely taxing, however, this youngster's face was completely relaxed, as if he was leisurely sitting on a chair instead of crouching in a martial stance.

Suddenly, an extremely faint rustling sound entered the ears of the youngster.

This sound wasn't the sound of wind rustling through dead leaves, instead, it seemed as if a man or an animal was approaching towards the

youngster in extremely gentle steps.

The mountain top had an endless stretch of tall and huge trees. Some trees had grown up to an extent that to completely encircle one such tree, many people would be required; it was a genuinely ancient forest. However, even though the forest was ancient, not many beasts would come down the mountain and cause harm during this time of scorching summer.

The youngster, while still maintaining the horse stance, faintly inclined his ear to listen. After a short while, his face displayed a faint carefree smile.

"Yitao, come out."

Along with the youngster's light shout, another youngster hopped out from behind a large tree. The latter was a bit smaller compared to the former.

"Sixth elder brother, your hearing ability is too good. You've discovered me again."

Both of these youngsters were the third generation children in the He Family Estate down the mountains.

The relatively bigger one, who was still in his training stance, was ranked sixth among the third generation, named He Yiming. While the smaller one was ranked ninth and was named He Yitao.

Although their age were only about eleven-twelve, they'd already begun to receive the elite education formulated for all the young disciples of the family.

They both were birthed by the family's first wife and had pretty good talent. Although their talent did not enable them to excel among their peers, it wasn't inferior to that of many others either. (TI: This line doesn't imply that they are blood-brothers. It implies that they are direct descendants, born of family's principal wives.)

After coming out from behind the tree, He Yitao suddenly lowered his body, applied strength through his feet, and dashed towards He Yiming like a lightning bolt. Both of his hands were on his chest; taking advantage of his charge's force, he struck at the latter during the last second before the collision.

Although his age was only eleven years, the strength in his strike and the velocity of his charge couldn't be belittled.

However, He Yiming, while faced against this strike, faintly smiled nevertheless. He seemed to have casually stretched out his hands, before he lightly pressed them against that fist brimming with strength.

"Ah...."

He Yitao's miserable shriek echoed. His body uncontrollably did a semicircular arc in the mid-air and whirled two times before rigidly crashing onto the ground.

For an instant, mud splattered in all the directions, while the primary culprit of all this, He Yitao, was flexing his wrist as he moaned in pain.

He Yiming faintly shook his head. As he looked at some of the mud that had been splashed upon him, he couldn't help but become further depressed.

"Ninth brother, why have you come to me with this move. I was thinking about changing these clothes tomorrow, now I've to wash them again."

"Hey hey...sixth brother, I merely wanted to try again." He Yitao flexed his wrist again. Although his strength was not low and he had attained a certain realm in the Internal Energy, his body, after all, couldn't be compared to an adult's. Although this strict fall was not likely to inflict injuries on him, he wouldn't be able to avoid some short-term pain.

"Humph...You still haven't attained the fifth layer of the Internal Energy; what are you trying again for?" He Yiming resentfully said.

He Yitao's big eyes brightly shined, and he hastily asked: "Sixth brother, have you sensed when are you going to breakthrough?"

He Yiming's expression turned extremely gloomy; at this moment, he didn't resemble a twelve-year-old child in the slightest.

He Yitao patted his head once and immediately grabbed his sixth brother's hand and said:

"Sixth brother, my bad, I shouldn't have asked."

He Yiming laughed and shook his head:

“It’s ok. This has nothing to do with you, it’s because of me myself.”

From the age of five, the children in He family began to cultivate the family’s Scriptures Of Internal Techniques. All the scriptures, regardless of their attributes, were divided into ten layers.

From the perspective of an ordinary individual, as long as one was not foolish up to an extent of being a complete retard and possessed even a little bit of talent, attaining the third layer within five years was not a problem at all.

Though, these above-mentioned three layers did nothing more than supplementing the health and increasing the longevity.

As for advancing after these three layers, that will depend on one’s talent, comprehension, and opportunities.

He Yiming, at an age of five, began studying Primordial Energy, which was one of the Internal Energy techniques that primarily focussed on metal. In the beginning, his cultivation speed was extremely fast. Just in a year’s time, by the age of six, he’d already achieved the third layer.

At that time, everybody was extremely optimistic towards his future prospects. Because such a cultivation speed not only implied that he was talented and hardworking, more importantly, it implied that he’d selected a cultivation technique that was compatible with his body. It was the only

possible way he could have advanced so quickly.

It should be known that the Scriptures Of Internal Techniques contained cultivation methods with all kinds of attributes. If one is able to choose a scripture that corresponds to the primary attribute of his body, then it is possible to naturally advance at an extremely fast rate. However, if one fails to do so, he may not be able to cultivate at all. He Yiming being able to select a technique that was compatible with his body on his first try, was a case of extreme luck.

For the next three years, he constantly advanced, and by the time he turned nine years old, he'd already attained the fifth layer of the Primordial Energy.

At this point, He Yiming encountered what everybody cultivator experiences at some point, that is a cultivation bottleneck. Moreover, he remained stuck at this juncture for full four years.

During these four years; two elder brothers, two elder sisters, and one younger brother in the family had caught up to him, attaining the fifth layer. Even his younger sister and younger brother had attained the fourth layer. However, he was completely stuck at this spot, no matter how diligently he tried, he couldn't advance a single inch.

In the family, among the third generation, the eldest one had attained the seventh layer, second and third ones had attained the sixth layer, and the remaining few were all lingering at the fifth or the fourth layer.

However, attaining the fifth layer at an age of nine and then showing no signs of progress for an entire four years, Yiming was the only such case

in the whole family.

Letting out a soft sigh, Yiming slowly straightened his body. Under the illumination of moonlight, his small and immature figure betrayed a trace of loneliness.

He Yitao stuck his tongue out. His breakthroughs had been pretty timely. During these years, he'd emerged as a new force among the younger siblings. He was even compared to his elder siblings, and everyone was extremely optimistic towards his future. He'd grown up in such an atmosphere that he'd no way to experience He Yiming's distress.

He Yiming's father and elders had discussed with him regarding his problem many times. They had told him in an extremely serious manner that if he couldn't lower the obsession in his mind, he might not be able to cross over this bottleneck in his entire lifetime.

This was the biggest mystery of the Scriptures of Internal Techniques. After the third layer, every breakthrough required a stroke of luck. If one's luck was good, he might be able to make the breakthrough naturally while cultivating, and might do so even without being aware of it. If luck was bad then one might not be able to advance a single inch in several ten years.

In cultivation, breakthrough naturally becomes increasingly difficult along with the advancement.

For example, in He family's first and second generation, after attaining the seventh layer, everybody had spent more than ten years or even several tens of years to make even a little bit of progress.

He Yiming was aware of this reasoning. He also knew that having the fifth layer at an age of thirteen still made him excellent among his peers. His second brother and third brother, Yi Hai and Yi Xuan, had attained the fifth layer only after they turned seventeen. He also knew he had a long time ahead him to cultivate.

However, knowing is one thing, while applying is other.

For a child of his age, controlling mind's obsession is actually very hard.

As He Yitao watched his sixth brother's complexion turning increasingly ugly, his heart jumped like a little deer. Despite not being related by blood and being two years apart from each other, they'd been unusually close from a very small age. Whenever He Yiming's upper brows began crease together, He Yitao would always feel his heart jumping out and skin shuddering. The latter forced out a smile and said:

"Sixth brother, I've something to take care of, I will return first. You should also come back soon."

He Yiming nodded his head listlessly and waved his hand. He Yitao immediately left in a monkey like manner. Though, his chicken like voice faintly echoed in He Yiming's ears.

"Sixth brother, if you truly haven't sensed any signs of the breakthrough, why don't you try choosing another kind of technique. Perhaps, it will be of use."

He Yiming blankly stared. His original boulder like heart shook a little.

Not all the cultivators of the Internal Energy could be like He Yiming who was able find a cultivation technique compatible with his body in his first try.

Some had to switch techniques two times, some three times, and some even had to switch many times. This, of course, also had a lot to do with individual talent. If one's talent is too lacking, then there is not much need to say about the results.

Although He Yiming did select a suitable technique at his first try, he'd been stuck on a single juncture for many years. Thus, changing cultivation technique was not necessarily a bad option.

He Yiming was aware of this reasoning, but he didn't want to easily give up a cultivation technique in which he'd put so much effort, moreover, it was compatible with his body and had also allowed him to make such a quick progress.

He Yiming glanced towards the bottom of the mountains. He was about to go in that direction, but then he caught a glimpse of mud on his clothes. His eyebrows faintly turned in another direction. After thinking for a bit, he turned towards the latter direction and sped off.

At the other side of the mountain's foot was a clear lake, which was also an amusement spot for He family's third generation children.

After arriving at the lake, He Yiming quickly and familiarly stripped off

his clothes and began to clean them. He was finished after a short while. Although his clothes were still wrinkled, they looked much better than before.

As he was about to leave, a radiance flickered inside the lake. He blankly stared for a bit. With his eyes opened wide, he looked at the lustrous radiance that had suddenly appeared inside the lake and was unwittingly being absorbed by his mind and spirit.

Chapter 2 - Fortuitous Encounter Inside The Lake.

The color of the radiance was strange; He Yiming, in the end, couldn't even name this color.

He Yiming faintly opened his mouth and tried to shout, however, no sound came out. He reached out with his hand and tried to touch the radiance but then realized that he was too far away from it.

He didn't know why, but he suddenly had an urge; he wanted to touch these light rays. He had to touch regardless of anything.

This was a shout coming from his instinct. Although he hadn't shouted with his mouth, in his mind, he was repeatedly shouting that he must touch this beam of light.

He Yiming took a step forward; one of his legs entered the lake, and the night's ice-cold water soaked his lower garments, taking away all of his leg's heat. If it had happened in ordinary times, he would have already cried out in fear and jumped back by now. However, the current him, as if being unable to perceive, stepped his other foot inside the lake as well.

In his trance-like state, he didn't even realize that both his feet had already entered the water. Subsequently, his entire being slowly entered the water.

A bizarre coloring was faintly discernible on the surface of the lake. He Yiming slowly moved downwards and arrived at the core of the lake.

It was only a small lake. The fishes, that were previously inside it, had immediately dispersed after seeing the bizarre-colored radiance. He Yiming was alone as he slowly swam towards that bizarre colored patch in the water.

He Yiming had gained all of his swimming abilities in this lake. Since his childhood, he'd practiced here every summer; his swimming abilities were pretty much self-taught. Although they were not top-notch, making this distance was not a problem.

Slowly but surely, He Yiming approached the bizarre radiance.

The more he got closer to it, the more he could feel this thing's intense attractive force. Just like a little boy in front of a candy, or a playboy in front of a naked woman, He Yiming was incapable of putting up any resistance in front of this radiance.

He lightly reached out with his hand to touch the radiance; so lightly as if he was holding a priceless treasure, as if he was holding onto his own life.

The radiance was forming a ball of light, which didn't seem to have any mass. However, as He Yiming's hands made contact with it, his mind was immediately filled with countless unimaginable images and sounds.

The first thing that appeared was a completely empty scenery. It was a complete vacuum. The only thing besides the vacuum was, the vacuum. And surprisingly, he himself also appeared as a kind of nothingness.

Free of all the anxieties, grievances, happiness; free of everything. He was like an unborn embryo inside a mother's body. He was thoroughly experiencing the meaning of word 'void' for himself.

This was not just a spiritual nothingness but was rather.....the true void.

After an unknown period of time, an extremely small radiance appeared in the emptiness. Something akin to the first light ray of the sun was born out of this void.

However, this light ray didn't have a smooth journey. After a momentary flicker, it died out, and the world was again plunged into an endless darkness.

The light ray appeared once again. The radiance illuminated everything and removed the darkness.

Subsequently, light appeared, disappeared; appeared, disappeared.

It was a cycle. And after every cycle, the radiance of the light was getting increasingly stronger. In the end, light prevailed over the darkness, releasing a huge burst of radiance which engulfed everything.

He Yiming's spirit also seemed to have awakened at this moment. Like a spectator, He Yiming looked at this bizarre transformation in a daze. For him, who was not even a youngster, these transformations were completely indiscernible; the only thing he could discern out of this was that he'd come across an extremely serious stuff.

It seemed that the darkness was unable to obliterate the radiance after it had completely blossomed. However, the darkness had not disappeared at all, instead, it was closely tangled alongside the light. Ultimately, the two vastly opposite forces formed a bizarre appearance.

An image that seemed like the picture of Yin-Yang Eight Divination Diagrams appeared inside He Yiming's mind. The thing to notice was that the two extremes, the Ying and Yang, were continuously spinning at the center. It seemed as if this spinning center wanted to engulf everything inside it.

Apparently a loud explosion occurred inside He Yiming's brain, and his spirit was irresistibly sucked into the explosion.

The continuously spinning center of the two extremes, the Yin and Yang, faintly emitted out many inconceivable pictures, which continuously flickered in He Yiming's mind.

At this moment, He Yiming seemed to have flown off high above in the air. Standing at a height of tens of thousands of meters, he was experiencing the sun's scorching fury and also the swift and fierce gigantic astral winds. He seemed to have arrived in the deep sea. He saw the inconceivably beautiful sight of the sea bed and also felt the fright of hundreds of meters high, gigantic, and intensely turbulent tidal waves.

While he was dumbfounded, he suddenly arrived in the deepest parts of the earth's crust. There, he saw all kinds of bizarre ores, moreover, he seemed to know every ore he saw like the palm of his hand. The very next moment, he had directly entered the earth's core. That red floating liquid capable of melting everything almost caused his spirit to disperse away.

His vision blurred and he left the eternal and unforgettable world of earth's core that was beautiful yet frightening. He found himself in a canyon. He raised his head and saw an infinite stretch of boundlessly high summits. Standing below a summit, he seemed as minute as a speck of dust.

In a flash, his figure had been raised high above in the air. The whole world seemed under his feet.

This was a beautiful world filled with countless exotic flowers and rare grasses. Originally, the forest was brimming with life. He suddenly felt as if the life force of the whole world had begun to leak away. Suddenly a white mist began to spread in the every corner of this world at an extremely fast rate. Nearly in a split second, everything in the world turned still, and the whole world froze over. He could see the beautiful flowers that had turned completely still due to being frozen over, and seeming like an ice sculpture made by an expert artisan.

He Yiming was extremely shocked. If there was even a little bit of possibility, he would have pulled himself back from this world long ago. However, at this moment, as if not being in control of his body at all, he was powerless to leave this world.

For the current him, even his spirit and consciousness seemed incapable of moving due to being frozen inside this world.

Suddenly, a gigantic clap of thunder echoed in the sky.

The completely white world suddenly started to darken. Gigantic

thunderbolts of unimaginable size began to flash everywhere in the sky. These thunderbolts seemed boundless and inexhaustible.

Thick lightning, while streaking through the sky, arrived over the frozen world and exploded. Everything turned into a pile of debris.

Gigantic thunderbolts were fluttering in the sky, and in accordance with them, He Yiming's spirit and soul were also shuddering.

Eventually, after a huge thunderbolt struck at his front, He Yiming saw a ray of light suddenly appearing in front of him.

This was the most primitive ray of light, which consisted the most basic source of energy inside it.

He Yiming extended his hand without the slightest hesitation. The light ray tightly tugged at the center of his hand. It seemed as if his body and mind had completely integrated with the light ray.

Everything in front of his eyes began to sway, and the entire world began to crack.

He Yiming suddenly shuddered once and regained the authority over his body again.

The cold air attacking every corner of his body reminded He Yiming that he was definitely not in a wonderful situation. He glanced at his surroundings and saw water all around him. Subsequently, he realized that he'd unwittingly entered the lake's ice cold water.

He Yiming immediately began to panic. Although his physique was much stronger than that of his peers, he was, after all, only a thirteen-year-old child. One can't expect him to not be frightened after he suddenly discovers himself surrounded by ice cold without having a single clue of how he ended up there.

Not only this, He Yiming still felt short of breath, as if his chest was a bomb that could explode anytime.

Perhaps due to a survival instinct, both of his hands began to stroke on its own, and his body began to rise upwards like a swimming fish.

He didn't realize that his current swimming ability seemed to have completely transformed; as if he'd shed his mortal body and had been born anew. His arms were light and dexterous like that of an ape, however, in just a few strokes, he'd already reached the surface of the water directly from the bottom of the lake.

"Huff.."

His head emerged out on the lake's surface, and he began to greedily suck in the fresh air. He was enjoying the air with a passion; it was a feeling that only a recently drowned person could understand. It seemed as if he wanted to breathe a lifetime of air within a time span of a single day.

He Yiming reached the shore after a short duration. He set both of his hands on the edge of the shore and nimbly jumped onto the shore.

His heart was filled with fear as he turned around and looked at the gloomy lake. In his memory, all he remembered was washing the clothes and seeing a bizarre light. Everything that occurred after that was fuzzy to him; all he knew was that he'd seen a lot of bizarre, vague, and inconceivable scenes.

Even though these scenes looked extremely real, he knew these were nothing more than delusions. Because if these scenes were real, he wouldn't be standing here alive.

He glanced at his completely drenched clothes; drying them in a short while was not possible, moreover, this place was filled with strange things, thus, he was truly unwilling to stay here any longer.

He turned around and frantically sped off towards the He Family Estate on the other side. However, this lake had already imprinted a permanent shadow in his mind.

Chapter 3 - Commotion During Morning's Training.

Although the remaining sibling were not geniuses who'd attained the seventh level, with respect to their current age, they could easily be considered as the selection of a generation. Therefore, the reputation of the He family was the same as that of the sun in the sky.

He family's rules were very strict. All the third generation children who'd not yet attained the sixth level were required to undergo early morning training. By the time He Yiming returned, loud shouts could be heard coming from the training ground of the family.

He Yiming raised his head, looked towards the sky once, and lightly sighed. Without caring about his completely drenched body in the slightest, he directly arrived on the training ground.

At this moment, five disciples of the third generation were performing the basic exercises on the training ground. These five were the disciples who'd not yet attained the sixth level. Three males and two females; even He Yitao was included.

At the ground's entrance, a man with a tall build was standing with hands behind his back. Even though he was standing in such a posture, his stern expression gave off an immense pressure.

Hi Yiming immediately walked forward, arrived at his side, and said in a low voice:

"Third uncle."

The big man was precisely He Yiming's third uncle He Quanyi. He turned towards He Yiming. At first, his eyes had a trace of anger, however, after looking at He Yiming's sorry figure, he couldn't help but blankly ask:

"Why have you come so late, and why are you dripping wet?"

He Yiming's face turned slightly red as he said in a muffled voice:

"Third uncle, yesterday night, I was performing night time's horse stance half way above the mountain. As I was coming down, my clothes got dirty, and while cleaning them by the lake, I fell down in the water by mistake."

The anger on He Quanyi's face gradually dispersed away, and he said:

"He Yiming, I know you are very diligent, but you should not go out in the night."

"Yes." He Yiming said.

The former waved his hands and said: "Go change your clothes and catch up on your sleep first."

He Yiming faintly bowed and returned back to his room at a lightning fast speed. Quickly and efficiently, he changed into a new training outfit, returned back to the training ground, and joined his siblings.

As He Quanyi saw the tenacious expression on He Yiming's face, he softly shook his head and let out a sigh.

The training was finally over; going on for three hours since dawn's first light. He Quanyi stopped shouting and again gave a few instructions before finally leaving.

As soon as he was separated by a significant distance, all the small children immediately sat down on the ground at the same time. Even the two girls were no exceptions.

He Yiming's vision swept through his siblings once. Consequently, just like before, he turned around and began to walk away.

"Yiming, when are you going to advance from the fifth layer?" A lazy voice sounded from somewhere among the youngsters.

He Yiming, without even turning, knew that the one who had asked this question was He Yi Zhang who was two years bigger than him.

In the family, his eldest uncle, He Quan Xin, had four sons: the eldest son He Yitian, the second son He Yihai, the fifth son He Yizhang, and the seventh son He Yiyu. His father, He Quanming, had two sons and one daughter: His brother He Yixuan was the third in the ranking, then came he himself - sixth in the ranking, followed his younger sister, He Yilong - eighth in the ranking. As for his third uncle, he'd one son and one daughter: his fourth older sister, He Yiling, and his little brother He Yitao.

They had the same clan, however, the interactions among the younger

generation were both good and bad.

The four brothers from his eldest uncle's family had always been together. Furthermore, He Yitian, the eldest grandson of the eldest son, was a peerless genius. Despite only being twenty years old, he'd already attained the seventh layer of the Internal energy.

The children of the second uncle and third uncle were a bit closer to each other. On the whole, the interactions between the members of the third generation were pretty much harmonious.

Currently, among the third generation, He Yitian, He Yihai, and He Yixuan had already attained the sixth level or higher and thus were not required to attend the daily morning training.

And the one who'd talked was He Yizhang, who was ranked fifth among the third generation.

He Yiming's footsteps halted. He lightly groaned as he said: "I haven't breakthrough yet. Fifth brother, don't tell me you are going to breakthrough?"

He Yizhang grinned and said: "Only a year has passed since my last breakthrough, how can I breakthrough again so quickly? However, sixth brother, you have already spent four years at this stage. Back then your timing of advancing into the fifth layer was more or less about the same as that of the second brother and the third brother. Now, they'd already advanced long ago, and you are still stuck on the same step. You should put more effort."

He Yiming's brows faintly rose. His heart was wildly throbbing, however, he didn't even turn before he coldly said:

"Many thanks for the fifth brother's concern. I know."

After finishing his words, he began to walk ahead in large strides.

He Yizhang sighed loudly and spoke in a taunting manner:

"Sixth brother, in my opinion, you should change your cultivation technique, perhaps you might just attain the sixth level in a single stretch."

He Yiming's didn't slow down in the slightest as if he hadn't heard He Yizhang's words at all.

The remaining five siblings looked at each other. He Yitao suddenly hopped onto his feet and chased after He Yiming.

The two sisters, He Yiling and He Yilong, glared at He Yizhong once and left hand in hand. The only one left behind He Yiyu, who was ranked seventh, miserably said: "Fifth brother, why did you tease sixth brother again? If dad or eldest brother get a gist of it, you will definitely be scolded again, and even I might be included."

He Yizhang glared at his younger brother and said: "Your guts are getting less and less... snort...What did I say to him anyway? As long as I attain the sixth layer before him, no one would be able to say anything to me."

He Yiyu, using a voice even he himself couldn't hear, muttered under his breath:

"Aren't you just jealous that sixth brother attained the fifth layer before you?"

Fortunately, He Yizhang didn't hear his own brother's mutterings, otherwise, he would have definitely gone insane with anger on the spot.

"Little brother, you should also try hard to breakthrough before him. This way, our family's blood will be far ahead in the lead." He Yizhang sternly said.

He Yiyu rolled his eyes and said in an incredulous voice:

"Fifth brother, you already made your breakthrough a year ago, and I my breakthrough was barely a month ago. Don't tell me you still want me to advance first?"

He Yizheng loudly snorted and said: "Correct. I want to you to double your efforts. Besides the eldest brother, second brother..." He hesitated a bit before continuing: "furthermore the third brother, no one else had succeeded in attaining the sixth layer."

He Yiyu's opened his eyes wide and said: "But both second brother and third brother are five-six years older than me. Moreover, it's only been a single year since they have advanced to the sixth layer."

He Yi Zhen's face turned red as he said: "Good. Little seventh, it seems like you have learned to talk back. Are you itching for a beating?"

He Yiyu immediately followed up: "Fifth brother, I haven't. My training is lacking."

"Good, then start to bitterly train from this very moment. I will keep you company. Hurry up! Don't be discouraged!"

He Yiyu: "....."

In his heart, he was saying: 'Is this truly my real brother?'

.....

He Yiming left the drilling grounds in quick steps. He had a belly full of anger but nothing to vent. Because he knew if he were to fight because of this small teasing, he would certainly incur punishment from his father.

Suddenly, sounds of gasping came from behind his body. He felt warmth in his heart, and he stopped his footsteps.

Sure enough, he immediately heard He Yitao's voice: " Sixth brother, don't listen to fifth brother's words. He's just jealous because you have attained the fifth layer earlier than him."

He Yiming smiled and patted the former's shoulders. He said:

"I know. You should quickly return back to study. Otherwise, third uncle will again say that you are naughty. He will chase you all over and make you eat a fried Bamboo Shoot meat slice." [1]

[tl: [1] = Bamboo shoot meat slice is a Chinese dish. Check out this link for pictures.

<http://baike.baidu.com/view/5034250.html>]

He Yitao's entire being quivered. With an appalled face, he looked all around him with hands on his buttocks.

Fortunately, he didn't see his father's figure. He let out a sigh and hesitatingly said: "Sixth brother, actually, fifth brother's words have some meaning. Shouldn't you try changing your cultivation technique?"

He Yiming's expression tensed, however, he smiled and said:

"I have my own thoughts. Thank you."

He Yitao agreed. He turned around and quickly left. Apparently Bamboo Shoot Meat Slice was really too big of a threat for him.

He Yiming looked at He Yitao's leaving figure and took a deep breath, while his smile had thoroughly disappeared long ago. As he slowly turned around, he saw a figure out of the corner of his eye. His heart suddenly tightened, and he immediately yet gracefully retreated several steps.

He Yiming, who'd assumed a fighting stance, forced a bitter smile and said as he straightened his body: "Third uncle, why you play such a joke on your small nephew?"

He Quanxi's stern face had a faint smile as he said: "Yiming, your reaction is pretty good."

"Many thanks for third uncle's praise."

"He Yiming, I have consulted with your father and eldest uncle. If you want to switch to a new cultivation technique, you can directly go to your eldest uncle's place and select any book from the clan's Book Pavilion."

Yiming's heart slightly shivered, he said: "Many thanks, third uncle."

He Quanxi nodded once. Subsequently, while leaving in the direction in which Yitao had recently left, he said: "I will go and check on Yitao. If he doesn't learn the characters properly, he will certainly have an extra meal for him."

While looking at his third uncle's retreating figure, Yiming raised his head towards the sky and eventually let out a helpless sigh. He hadn't expected that his father and uncles would have a special discussion on his problems. It seemed like preserving his own opinion was no longer possible.

Chapter 4 - Freakish Cultivation Speed.

He Family Estate didn't have too much population, however, the family owned several thousand mu [1] of farms, and the estate had several hundreds of peasant households. Furthermore, the family also had a business in the County Town. Within a radius of hundred li, the He family was considered to be one of the two most influential families.

[tl: [1] = 1 mu = 1 hectare]

Every member of the family's third generation had a personal courtyard. Of course, courtyard's size was not too big, however, it could at least be considered as an independent house with an independent door.

He Yiming returned back to his courtyard. However, before he could open the door, he suddenly saw his third elder brother, Yixuan, standing in front him with a smile on his face as he hummed a tune.

In addition to being ranked third in the third generation, he was also He Yiming's real brother, thus, the relationship between the two of them was pretty good.

"Third brother, what are you doing here?" He Yiming said with a pleasant surprise:

"Didn't father permitted you to Close Door Cultivation?"

He Yixuan lightly waved his hand and said: "Close Door Cultivation all

the time is really boring, so, I came out to roam a little.” He opened the gate and entered the room first.

The arrangements inside the room were simple and practical. He Yixuan directly placed a copied book on the table.

He Yiming stepped forward and glanced at it. His complexion immediately transformed, before he said:

“Third brother, this is a scripture of the Ripple technique.”

“This is my primary cultivation technique.” He Yixuan calmly said: “I’ve attained Internal Energy’s sixth layer in precisely this technique. I heard that you are going to change your cultivation technique, so, you might as well try this one.”

He Yiming’s heart stirred. He immediately realized that his brother wasn’t bored with the closed door cultivation at all, he’d come specifically for him.

He Yixuan didn’t perform courtesies with his younger brother as he opened the book and began to carefully explain the latter. Not only did he explain what was written on the cover of the book, but even explained his personal notes which he’d written from his own cultivation experience. He’d written all of his experiences from the first layer to the sixth layer, especially the fifth layer; he’d written a huge written account on his breakthrough from the fifth layer to the sixth layer.

He Yixuan only left when it was almost night. He even casually ate his

second meal in the midst of explaining.

After He Yixuan left, He Yiming looked at the extremely small characters in the book and was overwhelmed with emotions. The relationship between blood-brothers couldn't compare to ordinary relations.

He sucked in a deep breath and steeled his mind that he will not let father and elder brother down. 'This damned fifth layer, I will pass it no matter what.'

He Yiming entered his private room and lightly locked the door from inside.

He opened the Ripple cultivation technique's secret book and began to carefully comprehend it word by word.

This Ripple technique was primarily a water-based Internal Energy scripture. This cultivation technique's level was the same as that of the Primordial Energy which he'd been cultivating before. Since every individual's physique is different, the results obtained at the start of the cultivation will also vary accordingly.

Since he was already determined to change his cultivation technique, rather than just blindly trying to experiment with different techniques, he might as well cultivate in his third brother's technique. After all, the latter had bitterly trained in it for more than ten years, and this fact was obvious by one look at the experience he'd noted down which was twice as much as the actual content of the book.

Standing atop a big rock, one would be able to see afar; since He Yiming had such an opportunity, he will naturally not give it up easily.

After looking at the contents of the first layer and studying his brother's experience, although he wouldn't dare to say that he'd mastered the subject, he felt that he'd at least got the basic gist of it.

Ripple technique and Primordial Energy were not the same. One was based on water while the other was based on metal. Although both the techniques hardly differed in terms of the level, the course of the Internal Energy circulation inside the body was completely different for them.

He Yiming closed both of his eyes and began to work on the course of the Internal energy circulation as per the Ripple technique.

Under his thoughts, the Internal Energy, that was already present inside his body, began to circulate through the new channels that corresponded to the circulation path of the Ripple technique.

Unwittingly the moon had risen. The clean white light of the incomplete moon was entering through the hatchway and illuminating the Yiming's room as if the room was bathing in the moonlight.

He Yiming's eyes suddenly opened, and a strange color that couldn't be described in words could be seen on his face. He casually stretched out his hands and checked his body. After a few glances, his face turned incredulous.

Just now, he'd actually circulated his internal energy through the entire

course of the Ripple technique's first layer.

He was completely certain that this was his first contact with the Ripple technique and also his first contact with a water-type cultivation technique

Although he'd cultivated the Primordial Energy to the apex of the fifth layer, the Primordial Energy and the Ripple technique were two completely different cultivation techniques. Although the internal energy in both the cases was related somehow, circulating the internal energy through a set of completely different meridians couldn't even be mentioned in the same breath.

According to his initial estimate, if he was able to complete the circulation of the Ripple technique's first layer in even three years, he would have profusely thanked his ancestors. If he failed to complete the circulation within half a year, that would have meant that his body did not correspond to the Ripple technique, and he would have to select a new cultivation technique.

However, regardless of what Hi Yiming estimated, he'd never expected that he would be able to accomplish the first layer in his first circulation of the Ripple technique.

As he raised his head and looked at the moonlight outside the hatchway, his mind only had one thought, that is if he was actually dreaming.....

After a long time, with shuddering hands, he picked up the copy of the Ripple technique given by his third brother. The book wasn't heavy at all,

but at this moment, it felt like a thousand jins in his hands.

He sucked in a deep breath and prayed in his heart that if this truly was a dream, don't let him wake up too soon.

His vision swept through the contents of the second layer's page. He closed his eyes and began to contemplate the information of the book alongside his brother's experiences bit by bit.

After a good while, he felt that he'd comprehended to some extent. He gently placed the book down, sat up properly, and entered the cultivation realm.

Inside Yiming's Dantian, the internal energy filled with an exuberant life force surged violently, which gave rise to a strong propulsion force in his body.

Under his thoughts, the internal energy, as if water, began to bore its way through the mysterious channels inside his body without any restraints. Regardless of whether the meridians through which he'd just circulated his internal energy or the meridians that were being used for the first time, none produced the slightest bit of resistance for the circulating internal energy.

In this very manner, as if treading on a smooth ground, his internal energy circulated through the full course of Ripple technique's second layer.

When Yiming's opened his eyes, it not only contained ecstasy and

bewilderment, but also a trace of palpitation and a feeling of complete loss.

As a youngster who'd been fortunate enough to be in touch with the Internal Energy since an age of five, his elders had mentioned countless times about the biggest taboo of the Internal Energy cultivation: skipping levels by being profusely excited and overstating one's capabilities.

In their words, the cultivation of the internal energy is like the saying 'every turnip has its own hole'. Only by training more bitterly than the others one could achieve a sense of pride.

However, as He Yiming recalled, he'd never heard anything about someone capable of cultivating the first two layers in a half-night from his elders either.

He sucked in a deep breath. His vision turned towards the Ripple technique's secret book with countless thoughts bubbling in his mind.

Could it be.....

I am a genius; a true cultivation genius in water-type cultivation techniques!

There was no other possible explanation except this. Because this kind of cultivation speed could only be regarded as inconceivable. He hadn't been this shocked even during the time when he'd cultivated the Primordial Energy up to the third layer within a single year.

He straightened his chest and raised his neck. His eyes had a peculiar glint in them. With his heart filled with excitement and vision with determination, he looked at the Ripple technique.

He opened the Ripple technique once again and began to carefully study.

Perhaps because of the abrupt rise in confidence, his face was slightly flushed. He was incapable to completely suppress his surging heart. Cultivating Internal Energy at such a time was not suitable at all. However, He Yiming, as if being spellbound, exerted all of his energy into cultivating the Ripple technique.

Third layer.....

Fourth layer.....

Fifth layer.....

The moonlight was still shining outside the hatchway. After He Yiming opened his eyes again, the vigor in his eyes was replaced with numbness.

At the age of five, he began the cultivation of Primordial Energy. In the next four years, he cultivated up to the fifth layer. In the subsequent four years, he didn't advance an inch regardless of what did. Regardless of all these things, his cultivation speed up to the fifth layer was nevertheless the quickest.

However, at this night, this record had completely been overturned.

Within a day....no within half a night, he'd actually cultivated the Ripple technique, a cultivation technique which he'd never touched before, up to the fifth layer.

He Yiming's corner of mouth was slightly trembling. He wanted to shout loudly, but his mind was screaming that he couldn't speak as if his throat had been strictly choked by two invisible hands.

Although he was merely a thirteen old youngster, after growing up in such a family, he knew very well that such a feat couldn't be accounted on the basis of talent alone. Something like this could only occur through means of something sinister.

After being stunned for a long time, a faint concern arose in He Yiming's thoughts.

Although he wouldn't likely suffer serious aftermath because of such a high cultivation speed, however, as he recalled that once his elders had said that those who didn't have a solid foundation ultimately wander off to the path of Demonic cultivators, his heart turned cold.

Cultivating at a high speed was obviously a good thing, however, if this good thing caused him to go astray and become a Demonic cultivator, then he would rather not have it.

After circulating his Internal Energy few times, he was convinced that there wasn't any possibility of his body bursting out and him dying.

As he opened his eyes and looked at the Ripple technique's secret book lying on the table, a daring thought shot through his mind like a lightning bolt:

Since I can directly cultivate up to the fifth layer, then what about the sixth layer?

Chapter 5 - Sixth Layer Breakthrough.

He Yiming slowly placed down the book in his hands and opened his eyes again. The expressions in his eyes were uncontrollably transforming, and his frame of mind was surging like a boiling liquid.

At this moment, he remembered the days when he'd been cultivating at a lightning fast speed; everybody's astonished glances, his father's joyful smiling expression, his elder's harmonious gazes....

However, after bearing so many expectations, he eventually failed to endure the pressure. Numerous years felt like a day as if the time had stuck in place, causing his body to gradually lose its splendor. His status in the family also began to decline year by year. Although no one specifically pointed it out, it was apparent through some details.

The reason why He Yiming began to practice late night was also in order to alleviate the anger in his heart.

If this situation had continued on, a fight between siblings most probably would have broken out one day. However, fortunately, this Ripple technique had provided him with a new hope.

His eyes, which were shining like stars, slowly closed down, and the surging tides in his mind also quietened down gradually.

At this critical juncture, strangely, He Yiming was completely relaxed.

He himself was not clear on why he could enter such a state of mind. However, he was clear that this state of mind was extremely advantageous for what he was just about to do.

The course of the Ripple technique's sixth layer quickly emerged in his mind.

Inside his body, his meridians were being flooded with the violently surging Internal Energy. Unwittingly, his Ripple technique had already attained the peak of the fifth layer.

Endless Internal energy in his four limbs and hundreds of bones began to concentrate and slowly converge towards his Dantian while also circulating according to the pre-determined routes of the Ripple technique at the same time. Cycle by cycle, a strong energy was slowly being saved up inside his body.

Surprisingly, tonight, He Yiming felt like attacking that sixth layer which he'd attacked countless times in past without any results.

This time, neither was he cultivating the Primordial Energy which he'd cultivated for full eight years nor was he confident that he'd understood the experiences of his third brother, however, his heart was filled with a determination of only going forward without ever backing down.

For four years, every day and every night, He Yiming had incessantly thought about the juncture of the sixth layer that was right in front of his eyes; he'd already been there for too long.

A large amount of Internal Energy was slowly building up. Right now, He Yiming was so calm and steady that he himself was feeling a bit of odd.

At last, as the saved up Internal Energy inside his body reached the peak and also the limit of what he could control in his opinion, the surging Internal Energy rushed towards the sixth layer's course like the water of a broken dam.

Even though the courses of the Primordial Energy and the Ripple technique were completely different, the difficulty of attaining the sixth layer was more or less the same. Relying on his experiences of attacking the sixth layer ten times, He Yiming's heart suddenly had a strange feeling that this time's attack was certainly going to succeed.

Suddenly, a loud sound like a thunderclap echoed inside the mind of He Yiming, and everything suddenly transformed. Within an instant, he found himself in a completely different scenario.

It seemed like he'd returned to the time when he'd touched that bizarre radiance. Countless scenes and images once again flashed in his mind, causing him to once again experience those enormous spectacles that didn't seem related to a human in the slightest.

Eventually, amidst crackling thunder and flickering lightning as if the world's final's day, his spirit returned back to his body.

He Yiming's body slightly shuddered. The instant his spirit returned back to his body, he sensed an enormous transformation inside his body.

An Internal Energy course had successfully been opened up, moreover, the internal energy flowing inside his body, which seemed like water, was a notch above the previously flowing internal energy. His body seemed to brim with immeasurable strength.

When he opened his eyes, although the moonlight above him had already dissipated, his vision successfully seized the first light ray of the rising sun.

—

On the training grounds located at the rear side of the estate, the few youngsters were yet again going through the training seeming habitual. Today's supervisor was once again He Quanyi.

However, his expression didn't seem too good. Because, He Yiming, after arriving late yesterday, was once again absent today.

As the former looked in a certain direction, his heart was filled with a kind of rage that seemed like 'hating iron for not becoming steel.' However, it also had a trace of regret:

'This good seedling has been destroyed by the pressure from the clan. Is there really no way of redeeming him?'

Suddenly, he saw a figure running towards him at a lightning fast speed. Just in a few jumps, the figure was already in front of him.

His complexion sank as he said:

"Why are you again late today?"

He Yiming mumbled: "Third uncle, yesterday, I switched to the water type Ripple technique and lost the track of time for some duration while cultivating."

He Quanyi's expression eased a bit and he said:

"Cultivating like this? Are you feeling some backlash?"

He Yiming shook his head at once and said:

"No. Everything is normal."

"Ok." He Quanyi nodded with satisfaction and said:

"Cultivate properly, and when you attain the first layer, notify me as soon as possible."

After a bit of hesitation, He Yiming nodded slightly but didn't say anything.

Although in his mind, he very much wanted to inform his third uncle that not only had he already attained the first layer, he'd even reached the sixth layer. However, if he were to tell the truth as it was, he was completely uncertain as to what kind of treatment will he enjoy in the clan.

After all, just a thought of someone cultivating up to the apex of the fifth layer, moreover, even attaining the sixth layer in a single night was enough to frighten anyone to his bones.

He Quanyi waved his hands and said: "All right, join the training."

He Yiming agreed and entered among his siblings. However, his mind was clearly elsewhere; although he didn't make any mistakes in the training movements thanks to the practice of many years, his thoughts clearly seemed distracted from the very beginning.

Although He Quanyi did notice this situation, he didn't mind it at all. This was one of the after effects of changing the cultivation technique. Because, when He Yiming would be able to clear his thoughts, a knot in his heart would be untied.

The morning training was finished soon after. After He Quanyi left, He Yiming greeted He Yitao and his two sisters, turned around, and immediately left. He didn't provide He Yizhang and He Yiyu the slightest opportunity to say anything.

As He Yizhang saw He Yiming leaving, a trace of sneer hung on his face, while on the other hand, He Yiyu looked extremely miserable. It seemed like his third brother hated even him; this seemed like an unexpected calamity.

His eyeballs faintly turned as he thought whether he should inform his eldest brother or the second elder brother. The relationship between these two and his sixth elder brother was still pretty good.

He Yiming directly left the estate. As he saw no one was around him, he immediately began to sprint in nimble steps facing the mountains.

The mountains behind the estate lands were not just a few small peaks, rather it was an entrance to a huge mountain range. It had countless treasures, hundreds of spiritual medicines that have been growing for thousands of years, cruel and cunning ferocious beasts, and all other kinds of things that could easily stir the greed in the hearts of people.

However, it also had countless dangers. Apart from true hunters, very rarely would someone dare to enter the mountains.

Since He family estate was located so close to the mountain range, He family entered the range on a regular basis. He Yiming although was only thirteen years old, from the beginning of ten years of age, he'd entered the mountains at least four times every year. Regarding the conditions in the mountains, although he wouldn't dare to say that he knew them as the back of his hand, as long as he didn't enter too deep, defending himself won't be an issue.

Of course, during all the previous times, a member of the second generation was there to lead the third generation as all of the third generation members entered together. However, this time, He Yiming intended to enter the mountains alone.

Although the mountain path was very hard to traverse, in He Yiming's opinion, it didn't amount to much.

His internal energy began to channel into the meridians of his leg parts.

His steps became much nimble immediately. There were times when just by a soft touch of his feet on the ground, he was able to jump up to several meters.

This was, without a doubt, a basic use of the Internal Energy, and it couldn't be regarded as a result of the cultivation technique.

According to the rules of the He family, one must have attained the sixth layer in the cultivation of the Internal Energy before he/she could be allowed in the clan's Secret Scripture Pavilion to look for a suitable martial skill to cultivate. Before this point, one must spend all of his energy in the cultivation of the Internal Energy. This is because the Internal Energy is the basis of all the martial skills; only by possessing a strong Internal Energy would one be able to display the might of a martial skill to its extreme. If the Internal Energy is not strong, even if one possessed the strongest martial skill of the world, it would just be flowery fists and fancy footwork while the cultivator himself would be unable to withstand a single blow.

Of course, under equal levels of the Internal Energy, a high-level martial skill can pull open an enormous difference. However, when one places all of his thoughts on the martial skills, it is bound to make him a bit indifferent towards the Internal Energy cultivation.

The way of finding a path in between these two had indeed been a matter that had caused endless headaches to the cultivators.

He Yiming as of now was not worried about these things at all. He rejoiced as he sprinted on the ground. The realm of the sixth layer was not just a simple gain in his Internal Energy, in addition, it also provided a huge increment for his reaction speed and his self-confidence. At this

moment, He Yiming had such a confidence in himself that he believed he could even fight the heavens and earth.

After a short duration of running on the small path that he'd been on many times in past, he entered the Mountain forest.

After arriving at this point, He Yiming wanted to try out his power after cultivating the Ripple technique to the sixth layer. If he'd tried to do it in the village, he might have alerted someone very easily. After all, the old Ancestor, He Wude was a peak expert with the tenth layer of Internal Energy cultivation.

He Yiming knew his limits as well. He didn't enter the old forest at all, instead, he was lingering at its boundary. He randomly selected a tree with a width that would require three people to fully embrace it and stood in front of it. He calmly sucked in a breath, lifted his hand, and chopped with all his might.

The sixth level ripple, as if a water current, was rushing and transmitting out from the center of his palm. In a split second, he'd issued the most formidable might he could.

Chapter 6 - Fox Bear

That huge tree swayed as if it had been blown by a fierce gale of wind, furthermore, the leaves at the top of the tree floated down as if they had been scattered down by angels.

He Yiming's center of palm slowly left the tree trunk. That spot didn't seem to have changed in any way, however, He Yiming's eyes had an extremely pleased expression. Because he'd sensed that his fist had done a tremendous damage to the big tree.

He slightly reached out with his hand and lightly touched the region he'd just struck. It immediately turned into a fine powder and slid down like quicksand. After a short while, a cavity, which was dark enough to frighten people, appeared in that region.

As He Yiming looked at the masterpiece he'd created, he sighed inwardly. The Internal Energy at the sixth layer was truly incomparable to that of the fifth layer. Although the Ripple technique was primarily a water-based technique which was far below the Primordial Energy in terms of offensive might, the damage caused by the former's sixth layer was higher than the latter's fifth layer.

This was the advantage of formidable Internal Energy. Sometimes, a difference of one layer felt like a difference of thousand li.

Suddenly, a radiance flickered in Yiming's two eyes. He immediately turned around and looked towards his lateral-back side.

He'd heard an extremely faint sound of footsteps coming from that region. If this had happened yesterday, He Yiming wouldn't have necessarily been able to hear this sound. However, after cultivating up to the sixth layer, his five senses were a notch above. Thus, at this moment, his hearing was extremely clear.

The sound was extremely faint. Based on He Yiming's previous experiences, it seemed like the sound of footsteps of mountain chicken, or fox, or some other small creature. However, he didn't know why, but he felt a sense of indescribable crisis, and he didn't dare be neglectful in the least.

Eventually, a black hand stretched forward after pushing aside the branches and leaves in that area, revealing a black bear of two meters behind the branches and leaves.

He Yiming was a bit startled. His vision circled the body of the big black bear two times. Specifically after looking at the two ears of the big black bear, the expression on his face immediately turned heavy. In his mind, he cursed at his perfect luck.

He merely wanted to test his power after attaining the sixth layer. He never expected that he would actually run into this big guy at the periphery of the mountain forest. Moreover, looking at the manner of this big guy, he seemed to have come after being attracted by the recent noise produced by the trembling of the big tree.

This big guy was not a bear. Its build wasn't any different from the other normal bears, however, it had two long fox-like ears. It was a well-known

ferocious beast in the Mountains, the Fox Bear. Not only was it as strong as a bear, in addition, it was also cunning and nimble like a fox.

The might of this guy after combining these two properties couldn't be looked down in any way. Even those tyrants that resided deep within the forest wouldn't easily provoke such a guy. Usually, the fox bears always resided in the deepest parts of the forest, however, today one had surprisingly come out and had even founded He Yiming. The latter could only curse at his own bad luck.

He Yiming slightly crouched his body. He didn't turn around and escape, rather he calmly confronted his opponent.

Although he wasn't willing to provoke this guy even when he was extremely confident after just advancing to the sixth layer, if his opponent tried to get over his head, he wasn't much afraid either.

The fox bear also seemed to have sensed that this little human couldn't be easily provoked. It didn't immediately pounce onto He Yiming, instead, it began to slowly circle around He Yiming.

As He Yiming saw his clumsy and slow movements, he coldly laughed in his mind.

When a fox bear came across humans, it would first display slow movements like that of an ordinary bear, causing the people to be a bit negligent. However, if one were to truly relax his guard, it would immediately attack, and its opponent would very clearly understand its true speed.

The degree of this thing's craftiness could easily cause the people who were facing it for the first time to suffer a big loss. If He Yiming had not previously seen his eldest uncle strike down a fox bear with his own eyes, he wouldn't have necessarily been convinced that it could be so agile with such a huge body.

The fox bear had already circled around the He Yiming two times. It was also acting a bit strange. To it, this small guy didn't seem strong at all, however, it still felt an extremely dangerous feeling coming off from his opponent.

Perhaps because the it was feeling hungry from its journey from the deep forest, it eventually lost its patience. It lifted its thick bear palms and rushed towards He Yiming in vigorous steps.

Its gigantic body, which gave off a mountainous pressure, furiously pushed towards He Yiming. At this instant, the fox bear was thoroughly displaying the strength of a bear-kind species.

He Yiming neither backed or dodged. Because he knew that if he made any kind of strange movements, this bear would certainly become dexterous and catch up with his movements.

No one knew how many beasts and humans had been caught completely unaware by it and had finally turned into a feast for its mouth.

With a cold snort, a section of Internal Energy burst out from He Yiming's Dantain and arrived on his palms through the meridians of his shoulders.

At this moment, both, the might of the water type Ripple technique and the formidable Internal Energy of the sixth layer, were being displayed by He Yiming to the extreme.

An arm like a leaf fan, and an immature arm, resolutely clashed against each other.

The advancing footsteps of the Fox Bear immediately halted and its body stood up straight. At this moment, it wasn't giving off a mountain pressure like it did a moment ago, instead, it quickly retreated back at an extremely fast speed. Its movements were as quick as lightning and as nimble as a fox. In a flash, it had already retreated two meters away from He Yiming, furthermore, it concealed its body in between thick trees.

He Yiming's mouth slightly twitched as he grimaced in pain and sucked in a mouthful of cold air.

He'd already pushed his Internal Energy to the extreme and had also employed the Ripple technique as much as he could, however, his opponent had been able to resist his strike just by relying on its physical strength, moreover, the repercussions of this clash had brought him an indescribable pain.

However, that Fox Bear most certainly wouldn't be feeling too good either. Otherwise, it wouldn't have unhesitatingly revealed its lightning fast speed seeming like a bird who was afraid of a mere pull of bow, moreover, it wouldn't have left either.

He Yiming waved his palm. He recalled what his eldest uncle had once said about the nature of the fox bears.

This big guy not only was extremely cunning, in the mountain forest, it was reputed as an existence that intimidated weak and was afraid of strong. He Yiming knew that although he'd scared it into retreat in the first confrontation, it hadn't retreated too far, instead, it was lurking somewhere nearby and watching his every moment and action.

If he tried to turn around and flee or showed any weakness, it would never let him go, like a fungi sticking to a bone.

He Yiming sucked in a deep breath. The sixth layer Internal Energy once again entered his palms. His palms, which were a bit swollen, immediately felt a trace of ice-cold air.

This ice-cold air felt extremely cozy and the pain in his palm began to subside little by little.

Sixth layer Ripple technique cannot be compared to the same layer of metal type techniques in terms of offensive might, however, the former was unusually effective in a little bit of healing. Especially in his current situation, Ripple technique was extremely advantageous since he could heal himself with its help and proceed on to the next round.

He Yiming raised his leg and slowly yet resolutely advanced towards the direction in which the bear had retreated a moment ago.

Since this big guy was not willing to leave, he could only make him leave. As long as he could let it know that his strength was above it, going by its innate tendencies, it would certainly show respect to his strength and leave.

As He Yiming advanced step by step, a sound like that of pounding of a drum was echoing in his mind. His eyes were on full vigilance, and a bit of sweat was trickling down his upper garment.

He swore in his mind that after returning he would immediately go into the Scripture Pavilion. With his sixth layer Internal Energy, he was already qualified to study Martial Skill Scriptures. If he'd learned a martial skill beforehand, he would have been able to exhibit many folds more strength, thus, he would have been able to scare the bear out of its wits in a single strike.

Suddenly, He Yiming paused his footsteps, and his eyelids slightly jumped. It was a kind of feeling which one would have on the brink of an impending danger. Even He Yiming himself didn't understand how could he have such a sharp perception; this was a fortune that couldn't be obtained by searching for it.

He looked at his front but couldn't find the figure of the black bear in the thick bushes ahead.

'That guy's figure is enormous; if it was truly hiding in these low bushes, some clues certainly would have been left behind. Don't tell me that thing actually cowered back?'

Both the ears of He Yimin slightly trembled, and his entire being immersed itself inside a wonderful state.

In the face of the unknown danger and pressure, his body was getting aroused by itself. He was single-heartedly observing every movement

that occurred in his surroundings.

However, at this moment, he wasn't able to take notice of the fact that his Internal Energy was not circulating according to the Ripple technique, instead, it was circulating in accordance with the Primordial Energy which he'd cultivated for eight years.

Although the Ripple technique was formidable, He Yiming had, after all, only cultivated it for a single night. In ordinary circumstances, He Yiming was able to divert his attention towards this point, however, at this moment, he'd entered a bizarre realm. He wasn't able to spare his attention anywhere else other than observing his surroundings. Thus, the circulation of the Internal Energy inside his body had involuntarily returned to the course which it had diligently followed for eight years.

However, the thing He Yiming, even more, wouldn't have expected was that his Primordial Energy, after circulating up to the fifth layer, didn't stop at all. Instead, it began to circulate through the course of the sixth layer in an extremely natural manner.

Chapter 7 - Primordial Energy Sixth Layer.

The metal-based Internal Energy cultivation technique, the Primordial Energy, was He Yiming's first cultivation technique and was also the cultivation technique that he'd bitterly cultivated for full eight years until today.

In the last four years, He Yiming had hoped to enter its sixth layer countless times.

The circulation course of this technique's sixth layer had been deeply engraved in his bones. His heart had a deep-rooted stubbornness: He would not give up on this technique until there was no hope.

If not for the decision of his elders combined with the painstaking efforts of his third elder brother, he would never have substituted this technique.

Even though he'd obtained inconceivable success in Ripple technique, it couldn't be compared to the Primordial Energy. The latter had always been his primary cultivation technique, which, for him, was as inseparable as flesh and blood.

When He Yiming entered that bizarre realm, the Internal Energy inside his body involuntarily switched back to the Primordial Energy which he'd cultivated for many years, furthermore, he involuntarily entered its sixth layer. Everything seemed like the saying where water flows, canal will naturally form. There wasn't the slightest amount of hindrance, as if his Primordial Energy had originally been at the sixth layer.[1]

[tl: [1] = When conditions are right success will automatically follow.]

His eyes, which were half-closed, suddenly opened and emitted out a faint bright radiance, which seemed capable of drilling through heavens and earth.

His body suddenly jumped up on its own. In mid air, he turned around and struck with his hand. At this moment, all the Internal Energy inside his body was converging towards his hand, while his essence, qi, and spirit [2] had also been pushed to the peak.

[tl: [2] = Three vital energies in Daoism.]

A savage roar exploded out from the direction in which he'd just struck. However, the roar contained a trace of fear and timidity.

The fox bear, which was two meters high, opened its mouth and countered He Yiming's strike with its fan-like bear paw.

Bang....

Unlike the silent confrontation before, an extremely loud sound echoed this time.

Due to the formidable strength in He Yiming's strike, the fox bear's gigantic body rose up in the sky and rolled once in mid-air before miserably falling into dense bushes, even losing many bear hairs in the

process. However, once it had fallen down, it immediately hopped onto its feet at a lightning fast speed and made a desperate run for its life in the direction opposite to He Yiming.

Its speed was so high that associating such a speed with its gigantic body was absolutely impossible.

In a flash, the bear had already entered deep into the woods and had disappeared without a trace.

He Yiming stood on the ground. He slowly withdrew his swelled palm while looking at it with an astonished expression, though, he didn't feel any pain as he'd imagined. His expression was that of an extreme surprise mixed with many other emotions.

Before he issued that strike of unprecedented strength, he'd already sensed that, instead of using the sixth layer of the Ripple technique, he was using the technique that he'd cultivated for full eight years, the Primordial Energy.

He Yiming couldn't help but curse when he realized that the technique operating inside his body had abruptly switched. Although Primordial Energy was the strongest metal based cultivation technique in terms of offensive power, the gap between the fifth and the sixth layer was enormous. This caused He Yiming to lose faith that his strike would be able to injure his opponent. However, within an instant, the bear was blown away, furthermore, by looking at its appearance as it tried to flee with all its might along with its shaky movements, it had clearly suffered an injury, furthermore, the injury was not light either.

Consequently, He Yiming immediately realized that the Primordial Energy he'd used was not of the fifth layer at all, instead, he'd used the full strength of the sixth layer of a metal type cultivation technique.

He'd actually made the breakthrough without being aware of it himself.

This was but the Primordial Energy; the cultivation technique he'd practiced for whole eight years. His emotions towards this cultivation technique couldn't possibly be compared to the Ripple technique which he'd only practiced for a single night.

Surprisingly, his eight years of hard work and four years of anxiousness mysteriously succeeded at this moment.

Such an intense surprise and joy completely flooded his insides like a tide. He was truly feeling as if he was tasting the 'beginning of sweetness that comes after the bitterness'; he felt like shedding tears of joy.

At this moment, even if that fox bear hadn't escaped, He Yiming wasn't interested in tangling with it anymore.

After a long time, He Yiming recovered back from his ecstatic state.

His vision directly fell upon a patch of thick bushes at a distance:

'Who knows how much distance that repulsive yet pathetic bear has already covered.'

He suddenly recalled that wonderful realm when he'd delivered that strike. However, when he tried to recall that feeling, he was absolutely unable to catch the mysteries of that realm. Apparently, this kind of realm would completely disappear along with the passing of danger.

He Yiming knew that him being able to ascertain the direction of the bear had nothing to do with his eyesight or experience. It was all because of an indescribable feeling he had when he was in that mysterious state. This kind of perception seemed extremely useful in the midst of a fight. However, unfortunately, he couldn't grasp the slightest clue about that realm, and neither did he know if he would ever be able to enter that realm again in future.

Reluctantly, he glanced at the color of the sky, following which, without wasting a single second, he sprinted down the small mountain path.

His movements were extremely quick, furthermore, while he was running, the water-based Ripple technique was slowly operating on his arms.

The effect of water type cultivation techniques on self-healing was extremely clear. By the time He Yiming returned back to the He family estate, both of his hands were as good as before without a trace of injury.

He Yiming clicked his tongue in astonishment:

'The water based techniques surprisingly have this kind of a healing effect. Then what about the wood based techniques which are renowned for being the number one healing techniques under the heavens? I have to try for myself if I get the opportunity.'

By the time he returned back to the family manor, the sun was already inclined towards the west. After pondering for a bit, He Yiming decided to go to the back courtyard. After a few turns, he arrived in front of a huge courtyard which was completely made up of redwood.

In the minds of all the cultivators within the He family estate, this courtyard was akin to a holy land. Because this was precisely the Book Pavilion of the He family estate.

Not only it contained all the cultivation techniques possessed by the He family, in addition, it also contained various kinds of martial skill scriptures. Among the third generation, as long as one had cultivated up to the sixth layer of the Internal Energy, he was qualified to enter the book pavilion and select any martial skill of his choice.

He Yiming had immediately thought of this Book Pavilion after his first encounter with the fox bear in the mountains. If he had cultivated a martial skill beforehand, he wouldn't have scared the Fox Bear into retreat, instead, he would have peeled off his skin and muscles.

Fox bear's skin, gall bladder, paw, muscles, bones, and even meat were all extremely scarce things. If he could have sold these things for money, the fortune he would have obtained was enough to make him smile even in his dreams.

After softening his steps, He Yiming entered the courtyard.

"Yiming, you've come." A strong and powerful voice echoed from a side hall within the courtyard. Consequently, the door of that hall opened and

a big middle-aged man walked out.

He Yiming said at once: "Eldest uncle, this disciple has come to pay his respects to the senior."

This person was precisely He Wude's eldest son He Quanxin. He'd always been living in seclusion inside the He family's book pavilion. All the disciples who desired to enter the Book Pavilion must obtain this man's consent first.

As for He Yiming's father, He Quanming, and his third uncle, He QuanYi, both of them respectively managed the shop in the city and the feuds inside the manor. Both of these had already spent ten years at the junction of the eighth layer, while He Quanxin, due to being away from the external matters, had attained the ninth layer, being just a single step behind the Family Master He Wude's tenth layer.

The relationship between the third generation and the second generation was extremely familial. The little bit of friction among the third generation was only because of the extreme competition. Every member of the younger generation truly revered these few elders in their hearts.

He Quanxin glanced at him and secretly sighed in his heart, before he said:

"He Yiming, you can go in and make your choice. After discussing with your father and second uncle, I've selected three scriptures that may suit your cultivation."

He Yiming's lips slightly shuddered. He was extremely grateful in his mind. He said with his head deeply bowed:

"Many thanks eldest uncle."

He Quanxin faintly smiled and said:

"You are my nephew, what are you thanking for? However, I wish you could set aside the matters of cultivation and peacefully rest for a few days."

He Yiming was a little surprised but realized latter's meaning soon after. Apparently, his uncle was thinking that he would still not be able to succeed due to the shadow present in his mind.

"Eldest uncle, actually, yesterday, third elder brother had already explained the Ripple technique to this nephew. So, today, this nephew has not come for a cultivation technique."

He Quanxin asked in an astonished voice:

"Then, why have you come?"

"This nephew has come for the martial skills." He Yiming tried to speak as calmly as possible, however, his voice contained a faint and indescribable excitement.

He Quanxin blankly stared for a bit, before his gaze on He Yiming

gradually changed, and he said:

“Yiming, be careful.”

By the time He Quanxin finished his words, he'd already extended his palm towards He Yiming's chest in a very ordinary manner.

His palm was very slow; even a person who'd never trained into any skills can easily dodge it. However, He Yiming straightened his chest and extended one of his own palms to face latter's palm in a similarly ordinary manner.

He Quanxin's palm was not thick and huge like the fox bear's palm, however, in He Yiming's opinion, this palm would be far more frightening than the latter.

As He Yiming delivered the palm strike, the Primordia Energy in his body was fully circulating. At this moment, the might of a metal based technique's sixth layer was on full display. Even when he'd been fighting the fox bear in the mountains, his Internal Energy had not reached such an overflowing degree of power.

Softly, the two fists met, and He Yiming's Internal Energy emptied out without any reservations. However, he felt that his eldest uncle's palm was just like an endless pit; regardless of how formidable his Internal Energy was, it would never be able to fill this pit.

A strange color flickered in He Quanxin's eyes, and his face eventually displayed a faint, satisfied smile. He suddenly laughed heartily and said:

“Good. Yiming, today is exactly the middle of the month. Come with me to see father.”

Chapter 8 - Main Hall Dinner

Inside the He family estate, the beginning of the month and the middle of the month were the two days when the old family head, He Wude, would reveal himself to dine in the main hall. On these two days, the entire family in the estate would dine together.

Apart from He Quanming, who could not rush back from the city, all the other directly related members attended the dinner. This was also the only time He Quanxin left the family's Book Pavilion.

By the time He Yiming arrived in the Main Hall, all the other members had already arrived.

There were only five host seats.

Sitting on the middle seat was the old man who single-handedly established the He family estate: He Wude. Besides his left was an empty seat, which was the seat reserved for He Quanming; He Yiming's third uncle was sitting on the seat to its right, however, on the last seat was a handsome and elegant youngster. This youngster was precisely the eldest son's eldest grandson, He Yitian; barely twenty years old and had already attained the seventh layer of the Internal Energy.

In the estate, He Yitian was the only member of the third generation who'd the permission to sit alongside the elder generations.

In the cultivation of the Internal Energy, higher one goes, higher is the

difficulty. If one can attain the sixth layer of the Internal Energy cultivation before the age of twenty years, it was already an excellent achievement. Among the third generation, He Yiming's second elder brother, He Yihai, and the third elder brother, He Yixuan, attained the sixth layer somewhere in between eighteen and nineteen years. None of the elders had any doubt regarding the fact that without another ten or twenty years of hard work, they shouldn't be thinking about taking the next step.

On the other hand, the eldest member of the third generation, He Yitian, attained the sixth layer when he was merely fourteen years old. After another hard work of six years, he advanced to the seventh layer before the age of twenty. He was considered as the clan's number one future pillar.

As for He Yiming, when he'd attained the fifth layer, everyone in the family had high hopes for him. The attention he received even surpassed He Yitian. However, this excessive attention instead stagnated his Internal Energy cultivation. The status of the current him was nowhere near He Yitian's.

On the subsequent seats, except He Yiming, the entire third generation was present. Even his two elder brothers who were always behind closed doors in order to improve their cultivation, He Yihai and He Yixuan, had also punctually arrived.

Seated on the main seat, possessing wide temples, dense eyebrows, and a wisdom that could see through others concealed inside his two deep eyes, He Wude, lifted his head and said with a smile:

"Quan Xin, you are late today."

He Quanxin immediately paid his respects and said with his whole face covered in smiles:

"Father, although your child has come late, he has brought you a good news."

A trace of surprise flickered in He Wude's eyes as he asked:

"What good news?"

"Father, today Yiming came to the Book pavilion." He Quanxin paused and pulled He Yiming to his side, before continuing:

"Yiming is already qualified to cultivate martial skills."

The Main Hall immediately turned silent. After a short while, He Quanyi suddenly stood up and asked in a pleasantly surprised voice:

"Yiming you have advanced to the sixth layer?"

He Yiming heavily nodded and said: "Yes."

The third generation seated in the subsequent seats all had different expressions. Those who had good relations with He Yiming exchanged glances with joyous expressions in their eyes. If elders were not present, they would have certainly created a huge ruckus.

While He Yizhang, who'd relatively bad relations with He Yiming, had a little change in his expression and his eyes seemed a little lost.

He Yihai and He Yixuan, these two disciples of the third generation who'd already advanced to the sixth layer, exchanged a look with each other. Their expressions were extremely complex, having dim traces of envy and admiration with immense joy.

Subsequently, as they turned their heads and saw Yizhang's expression, they couldn't help but let out a soft sigh. In their minds, they truly couldn't understand why their generation's number fifth and number sixth had such a hostility. These two were truly an odd pair inside the family.

He Yitian also stood up from his seat. Being the eldest son's eldest grandson, he truly had a special privilege among the third generation. Even at this moment, he could say a few lines.

"Sixth brother, you are truly amazing. In attaining the sixth layer, your speed should be quicker than mine by a year."

He Yiming scratched his head and foolishly laughed, however, he absolutely didn't open his mouth. His circumstances of this breakthrough were too absurd; he didn't dare run off his mouth.

On He Wude's serious face, eventually, an extremely pleased smiling expression surfaced as he said:

"Yiming you are indeed not bad. Someone deliver this information to the city; let Quanming return and rejoice as well."

Someone naturally took care of the Old Estate Master's order. Directly related members of the clan didn't have to worry about such things.

He Wude stood up from his seat and walked past the dining table in a few strides. He arrived in front of He Yiming and casually extended his palm towards the latter.

A faint helpless smile flickered on the face of He Quanxin. Apparently, the old man would never be convinced before confirming the truth with his own hands.

He Yiming, without having any time to think, resisted his grandfather's palm with his own palm. Consequently, the sixth layer Primordial Energy rose up like a tide. This time, he'd some experience, thus, after the strike was delivered, he immediately restrained his Internal Energy. However, the strength behind this strike was enough for He Wude to clearly determine He Yiming's foundation.

Subsequently, the smiling expression on the old man's face became increasingly dense. He heartily laughed and said:

"Good, very good. He family once again has a sixth layer Internal Energy expert under the age of fifteen." His loud and clear laughter, without concealing the happiness in his heart at all, echoed in the hall. He continued:

"Quanxin, you will later accompany Yiming to the Book Pavillion, and allow him to select a martial skill. Tell him the details as well."

"Yes." He Quanxin said with a smile.

As He Yiming watched his elders, he was extremely suspicious in his heart.

Attaining the sixth layer was not an extremely extraordinary event; in his memory, at the time of his second and third elder brothers' breakthrough, although his grandfather was excited, it was nowhere close to being.... ecstatic, as he seemed at this moment.

Even his eldest uncle and the second uncle seemed extremely pleased. Such a display from them was clearly and starkly different from when his second and the third elder brothers had advanced.

He Yiming secretly looked at He Yitian, however, the latter instead winked twice while looking in his direction. He Yiming could perceive faint traces of envy in his eldest brother's thoughts alongside the immense joy.

Suddenly, he felt a chill in his heart:

'I can discern the thoughts of elders and the eldest brother through their expressions? What on earth is going on? When did I become so sharp?'

He Wude said: "Yiming, when did you breakthrough?"

He Yiming immediately restrained his wandering thoughts and said in a respectful tone:

"Grandfather, this grandson had his breakthrough today."

He Quanyi asked in a strange voice:

"Yiming, yesterday you switched to Yixuan's Ripple technique, so why have you instead advanced in the Primordial Energy today?"

He Yiming bitterly cried in his heart, however, he'd already determined in his heart that he could not tell anyone about the strange things going on inside his body.

His heart tensed up, and his vision dropped down when he saw his wrinkled clothes. He came up with an idea on the spot and said:

"Third uncle, today, after the morning exercise, I went into the mountains to continue tempering my body. However, I did not expect to suddenly run into a fox bear."

The faces of He Wude and the rest immediately showed a nervous expression:

"Where was that fox bear?"

Fox bears were considered as one of the troublesome kinds of ferocious

beasts in the mountains. It possessed the strength of a bear and the cunningness of a fox at the same time. If this fox bear happened to be hiding outside the Manor, the ordinary people of the estate and the younger disciples were being subjected to an enormous danger.

He Yiming immediately said: "At the edge of the mountain forest, but I have already fended it off."

"You fended it off?" He Quanyi asked with an odd expression.

Living down the mountains, they were extremely clear about the strength of a fox bear. Although He Yiming had recently been promoted to the sixth layer, he was, after all, an amateur who didn't know a single martial skill, moreover, his age was just too small. He might not be an opponent for a fox bear.

He Wude lowered his voice and said: "Yiming, tell your today's encounter with that fox bear from the start, include every single detail."

"Yes." Yiming immediately composed himself and recounted his fight with the fox bear.

Of course, he couldn't mention that he'd already reached the sixth layer in the Ripple technique, instead, he said that he'd been using the Primordial Energy from the beginning. However, he didn't hide his mysterious breakthrough in Primordial Energy, in fact, he himself really wanted to know why did his Primordial Energy involuntarily advanced.

After Yiming finished speaking, He Wude faintly nodded his head and

said:

"Yiming, your luck is pretty good. That fox bear was very possibly injured before it came across you. It is extremely fortunate that this was the case, and you were able to deal with the fox bear at the beginning using your fifth layer Primordial Energy. "

He Wude's face revealed a trace of gratified expression as he looked at his grandson and said:

"Yiming your bitter training has not been a waste in the slightest. The pressure of confronting a fox bear has fully brought out the achievements of you daily training, and it even allowed you to unwittingly cross over the barrier of the fifth layer without a hitch. Ah....this is truly a blessing from heavens."

He Quanyi and He Quanxi nodded in succession. As they thought of that time's danger, they involuntarily broke out in a cold sweat. If the fox bear hadn't been injured or He Yiming hadn't smoothly advanced at the critical junction, he might have tragically met his end.

If this situation had really played out, how would they have faced their second brother then?

He Quanyi suddenly snorted in anger and said:

"Yi Ming, the rules of the family are that the third generation cannot enter the mountain forest alone. Why did you go there?"

He Yiming blinked his eyes as he cursed in his heart.

He Wude and He Quanxin also responded and looked towards He Yiming with malicious gazes.

He Yiming mumbled: "Third uncle, it's just that I was feeling bored, and I went for a walk, that's all. Moreover, I only walked around the edge, I didn't enter the forest at all."

"For a walk? You know how many dangers one has to face being alone in the mountains? You even had the nerve to run into a ferocious beast like fox bear." He Quanxin furiously said.

"Starting from today, you will properly remain inside the home. Without my permission, you are not allowed to take a single step outside."

He Yiming cast his glance towards his Grandfather and the eldest uncle. Both of them averted their faces and completely ignored He Yiming. It was clear that they were also agitated by this matter.

In his heart, He Yiming was cursing the Fox Bear all over: 'couldn't properly stay in deep forest, why did it have to run all the way up to the end of the forest?'

However, in face of his third uncle's angry gaze, he could only say:

"Yes, third uncle."

In the next few days, the family master He Wude, himself, together with He Quanyi checked everywhere around the foot of the mountain several times, furthermore, they also examined that region where He Yiming had his first confrontation with the fox bear. Only after they had ensured that the Fox Bear had truly left did they remove the alert in the estate.

Chapter 9 - Book Pavilion

The color of the sky had darkened by the time meal was finished.

He Yiming left for the Book Pavilion along with his eldest uncle. Although He Yixuan and several of his other siblings wanted to congratulate him, just one glare from He Quanyi, and all of them scattered away like birds, without showing the slightest amount of loyalty to their sibling.

In ordinary times, all the matters, of both inside and outside the Estate, were handled by his third uncle. For the members of the third generation, he was a sinister existence. They were far more afraid of him than their grandfather or their eldest uncle. Perhaps only the eldest grandson of the eldest son, He Yitian, could receive a favorable treatment from him.

The Book Pavilion's courtyard was the biggest courtyard in the entire He Family Estate. In addition to his eldest uncle guarding it, a special servant of He family lived there as well. This servant's status was extremely high in the Estate. No one amongst the third generation could order him, though, he had the qualifications to be arrogant because his Internal Energy was at the eighth layer, which was not a single bit less than He Quanyi and He Quanming.

He Quanxin, leading Yiming, directly entered the main hall.

The main hall of this courtyard was different than that of the rest of the courtyards, because, this main hall was the biggest library in the He

family estate.

Upon entering, He Quanxin said: "Yiming, sit."

He Yiming swept his gaze and found himself a chair to sit down, while his vision had already begun to browse through the books in the bookshelves.

"Yiming, first of all, I congratulate you. After me, you, and Yitian, only four more individuals have a chance to attain the sixth layer before the age of fifteen." He Quanxin earnestly said.

He Yiming's vision immediately returned from the shining bookshelves surrounding him.

He Quanxin was extremely satisfied with his reaction. He continued:

"Although all the children in He family can begin cultivating the Internal Energy Scriptures at an age of five, I can assure you that although your disparity is not big as of now, however, after twenty years, it will just keep getting bigger. Yitian and you have some hope to attain the highest tenth layer, however, the rest of your siblings, could at most attain the eighth layer in their lives."

He Yiming mumbled for a short duration, before he probingly asked:

"Eldest uncle, is this related to eldest brother and me advancing to the sixth layer before the age of fifteen?"

“You are not wrong. Although we cultivators have vastly different physiques, the fact is, the golden time to lay down one’s foundation is before fifteen years. Moreover, a strange phenomenon occurs amongst us cultivators, if one is unable to attain the sixth layer before the age of fifteen, then in future, it is exceedingly hard to transcend the eighth layer regardless of the amount of effort one puts in. ”

He Quanxin lightly sighed and continued:

“Although your second and third brother were not inferior to you or Yitian in terms of hard work, however, the fact is, they only attained the sixth layer at seventeen-eighteen years. Throughout their life, they can at most hope to attain the same as my second brother and third brother. Basically, they have no hope of attaining the tenth layer.”

He Yiming’s heart turned dark as he thought:

‘No wonder second brother and third brothers were looking at me with weird gazes. Seems like they already knew this matter.’

He Quanxin waved his hand and said:

“Yiming, though, I’ve informed you about this matter, be sure to keep your mouth shut like a jar. Yizhang and the rest of them must not know about this.”

He Yiming was a little stumped but nodded immediately after, as he’d realized his elder uncle’s thoughts:

They need not think about this matter unless they reach the sixth layer.

“Furthermore, now that you have reached the sixth layer, you even more can’t relax for what you seek. After this, the difficulty of advancing every subsequent layer becomes increasingly difficult. If you take this lightly, you will just fade away among the multitudes of people in future.” He Quanxin’s expression suddenly became very strict as he continued:

“Remember: Henceforth, Yitian is your target, and you will strive to surpass him. Currently, you are thirteen, work hard to attain the seventh layer within the next seven years, and if you cannot do it, you need not take a single step outside the Manor.”

He Yiming’s body suddenly shivered. His eldest uncle had always been very gentle with people, and very rarely did his voice turned extremely strict in such a way. But, he was also aware that this was related to his eldest uncle having high expectations of him.

“Quanxin, don’t scare Yiming.” He Wude’s voice came from outside the door.

He Quanxin immediately stood up, opened the door, and welcomed his lord father in. He Wude’s face still had a few traces of his previous smile.

He first allowed He Quanxin and He Yiming to sit down, then said in a remote voice:

“Yiming, the truth is, both you and Yitian are the most talented

disciples amongst the third generation, but your luck is better than Yitian's. You were able to choose the correct path on your very first selection of the Internal Energy Scripture. When you cultivated your Internal Energy up to the third layer within a year and fifth layer within five years, I and your uncles were very pleased and had extremely high expectations of you, thus, what we asked of you was also extremely high.

"

He took a deep sigh before continuing:

"In the next few years, the pressure you faced was a bit too much. Although your Internal Energy was cultivated up to the peak of the fifth layer, you were unable to untie the knot in your mind regardless of whatever you tried. For all of this, you should not blame me."

He Yiming's complexion slightly changed as he said:

"Grandfather, grandson absolutely doesn't have such thoughts."

He Wude smoothened his lips and waved his hands, before saying:

"You have talent and luck. In our He family, we subject such seedlings to the maximum possible pressure. Back then, I was same, your eldest uncle and Yitian were also the same. Furthermore, only after the disciples overcome this pressure will they have some accomplishments in future. Fortunately, even though we all had different fates, we all managed to come through in the end. This can also be regarded as ancestors' blessings."

He Yiming only expressed his consent, while in his heart he was secretly sighing:

'You all have overcome this obstacle on your own, what about me?'

How he overcame this obstacle, even he didn't know. However, even if he'd twice his courage, he wouldn't dare breathe a word of it.

He Wude's expression again turned imposing as he said:

"Yiming, you have been informed about all the things. Your future accomplishments are in your hands. We elders can only provide you a little bit of guidance, however, ultimately, how much you grow depends on your own efforts."

He suddenly stood up and began to walk away. After reaching the door, he said without turning his head:

"If you or Yitian manage to reach the tenth layer before the age of thirty.....forget about it...everything depends on destiny."

After finished speaking, He Wude figure's suddenly disappeared from its position. He Yiming blinked his eyes in astonishment; he had actually no idea how his grandfather left. A master of Internal Energy's tenth layer was truly nothing like ordinary.

He thought about what did these words of his grandfather actually meant.

He Quanxin followed his father with his eyes. Eventually, he let out a sigh and said:

"Yiming, the limit of the pressure one could bear, somewhat vary from person to person. Since lord father has spoken, in the future, whether you want to strive or not will depend on you."

He Yiming promptly said in a respectful voice: "Yes, eldest uncle."

Perhaps because He Quanxin felt that He Yiming had exhaled a sigh of relief after hearing his words, he snorted and said:

"You need not celebrate too early. I will talk with the third brother and let him press you on your cultivation even more. This kind of talent and luck absolutely cannot be wasted."

He Yiming immediately felt an even bigger headache coming his way. However, he didn't dare oppose in the slightest.

He Quanxin pointed towards the bookshelves and said:

"Yiming, do you know why the family had established the rule that only after cultivating the Internal Energy up to the sixth layer would you be able to touch Martial Skill Scriptures?"

He Yiming thought for a while and said:

“Eldest uncle, although this nephew felt an increase of strength during the breakthroughs of previous layers, the sixth layer seems rather different. Especially, in terms of Internal Energy’s Promotion, the other layers couldn’t even be mentioned in the same breath”

He Quanxin nodded with satisfaction and said:

“Correct. You are clever. All Internal Energy based cultivation techniques have a special trait, that is, the sixth layer is a dividing line. Regardless of one’s aptitude, as long as one strives, he will certainly be able to attain the fifth layer in a few ten years. However, from the beginning of the sixth layer, advancing every layer becomes increasingly difficult. Although your father and third uncle only lack the cultivation of one layer, even if they both join hands, they shouldn’t imagine crossing ten moves with me. Of course, your grandfather has already attained the tenth level, and I won’t be able to cross even three moves with him relying on my cultivation of ninth layer’s peak.”

He Yiming repeatedly nodded. His heart truly had an extreme fascination for his grandfather’s abilities.

He Quanxin suddenly shook his head and said:

“Why am I talking these things with you?”

He Yiming was tongue-tied. He wished to smile but didn’t dare to do so. His entire face seemed weird.

He Quanxin coldly snorted, however, he was not He Quanyi. Although

his face seemed sinister enough, he was rather unable to intimidate He Yiming.

He helplessly shook his head and said:

“Internal Energy cultivation at fifth layer or below only have rejuvenating effects on the body. However, after the sixth layer, there is a great increase in the body’s explosive strength. Only after stepping onto this step, one can truly possess the qualifications to use Martial Skills.”

He Yiming immediately nodded:

“I get it. Internal Energy is the basis of every cultivation. If one is unable to attain the sixth layer, then it’s of no value. Only after the sixth layer would one be able to display the might of a martial skill.”

He Quanxin’s taut face relaxed a little, and he said:

“You are clever; you haven’t said a single thing wrong. For true cultivators, fifth layer or below doesn’t amount to anything. Cultivating Martial Skills before the sixth layer is just like pulling the sprouts to help them grow. Therefore, the lord father established this rule, so that you all will not be able to practice Martial Skills and distract yourselves as a result.”

He Yiming repeatedly sounded his agreement. Being not allowed to cultivate martial skills below the sixth layer, in other words is also, allowed to cultivate from the sixth level.

His vision once again turned to the bookshelves surrounding him. He began to scan the books with a racing heart.

He Quanxin, who was about to give him a few sentence of advice, shook his head. He knew that whatever he said at this moment would enter the latter's left ear and would be out of the right one.

"Yiming, after this point, you can flip through the scriptures as you wish. This whole row is of metal type scriptures. I still haven't finished speaking....all right.... You monkey, do whatever you please, but be careful and don't be avaricious and insatiable ."

Chapter 10 - Metal And Water Type Battle Skills

Rolling Stone Fist: Metal type battle skill scripture.

This was the first Martial Skill Scripture He Yiming found in the Book Pavilion.

The bookshelf in front of his eyes had metal related techniques, supplementary techniques, and battle skills. Even the Primordial Energy, which he'd cultivated for eight years, was included among these.

Although the bookshelf was very big, it did not have many scriptures; only adding up to an insignificant number of twelve after combining all the scriptures. Of course, regarding an ordinary individual, it would be an amazing feat even if one could master half of these in one's entire lifetime.

He Yiming rummaged through these for half a day. Although he was extremely curious about all of these scriptures, he still had the words, that his eldest uncle said before leaving, in his mind:

Don't be avaricious and insatiable.

After cultivating Internal Energy for half of his life, He Yiming was extremely clear on the principle of biting off more than one can chew. Therefore, after comparison, he selected his first battle skill scripture.

Rolling Boulder Fist was a special fist skill that delivered strikes with

might like that of a rolling boulder, with the use of metal-type Internal Energy. The might it produced was not too strong, however, it had a special property.

Its might increased along with the time of use.

Of course, it had extremely high Internal Energy consumption rate and toughness requirements. An ordinary sixth level cultivator will not select this skill, because, he wouldn't be able to sustain the Internal Energy requirements for prolonged time periods.

However, He Yiming's situation was rather different. He was not just a sixth layer Internal Energy expert in the metal type, in addition, he had attained the sixth layer in a water type technique as well.

Water-type technique's main feature was precisely an inexhaustible amount of Internal Energy, furthermore, the toughness obtained from water-type technique was the most formidable amongst all the attributes.

Although Rolling Boulder Technique was a metal type technique, He Yiming's Internal Energy contained a water type technique's sixth layer as well, thus, it naturally possessed the characteristics of that water-type technique.

Under the collaboration of these two things, Yiming would be able to bring forth the most formidable might of the Rolling Boulder Fist.

Therefore, after He Yiming had read the introduction of Rolling Boulder

Fist, he almost felt as if this Martial Skill Scripture had been created with his condition being in the mind of this skill's creator. Thus, he selected this technique without the slightest hesitation.

At the center of the main hall was a big table, with a lot of special papers on it.

The younger generation of He family, after selecting a scripture, cannot leave the Book Pavilion with their selected scripture. They could only make copies of the pictures and script it contained.

Yesterday, the Ripple technique that his brother gave him, was also a copy that Yixuan made with a brush.

By the lamp, which cannot be regarded as too bright, Ye Ming slowly copied down all the contents of the Scripture; especially the diagrams, he accurately traced them down to perfection.

Of course, he didn't copy down the entire scripture. He only copied that content of the Scripture which was for the sixth layer cultivators. In any case, as a child of He family, he'd the privilege to enter the Book Pavilion at any time. Therefore, as soon as he advanced to the seventh layer, he could just come here again to make further copies. On the other hand, if by any chance he was instead unable to control himself and tried to learn the higher levels of the battle skill, that won't really be a good thing for him.

After he finished copying down the contents of the scripture, he carefully placed it back to its original position and waited for ink on the papers to dry.

Suddenly, He Yiming's vision shifted to a bookshelf towards his lateral side.

He hesitated and checked the time. As he saw that it wasn't even midnight yet, his thoughts began to stir up.

Others thought that he'd only cultivated the Primordial Energy up to the sixth level, however, they were completely unaware that he'd also cultivated the Ripple technique to the sixth layer.

This being the case, should he cultivate a water-type battle skill at the same time?

After seriously considering it for a while, He Yiming decided that this was not being avaricious and insatiable at all.

He slowly arrived in front of the bookshelf labeled as 'water' and began his search.

The scriptures here clearly surpassed the metal-type scriptures by a vast number. Surprisingly, this bookshelf had more than thirty scriptures, which was about twice as much as the metal-type scriptures.

He immediately realized that the number of people cultivating in water-type scriptures had to exceed the number of people cultivating in metal-type scriptures by a huge amount, thus, causing their respective number of the scriptures differ by a large number.

This point was not just determined by the respective number of the scriptures in the Book Pavilion. Even when taking the younger generation of the He family into consideration, He Yiming was the only one who cultivated in a metal-type technique.

Comparatively, both in terms of selection and accomplishments, water-type techniques were far ahead of metal-type techniques .

Since the number of the scriptures on this shelf were comparatively more, He Yiming flipped through them at a much quicker pace. Eventually, after about an hour, he had a single scripture in his hand.

Silk Palm, water-type battle skill scripture.

According to He Yiming's knowledge, Silk Palm was a common and mass-oriented battle skill scripture. Although he'd not ventured past ten miles outside the estate, he'd heard his father and uncles discussing some affairs of the outside world.

From there, he knew that, basically, all the water-type cultivators of the outside world would master Silk Palm.

Silk Palm was the simplest and most basic battle skill among the water-type battle skill techniques. One could cultivate in it as long as one's Internal Energy had attained the fourth layer. Such a low cultivation threshold was one of the best among all the battle skills.

Perhaps this was the reason that Silk Palm was one of the most widespread battle skill. Since it was simple and practical, the increase of

its might was proportional to the breakthroughs in the Internal Energy. This was not a fancy battle skill; as long as one continued to strive, this skill could certainly become the best supplementary battle skill for a cultivator.

Especially for He Yiming, who'd steeled his mind on cultivating a metal-type battle skill as his primary battle skill, choosing a water type-battle skill as a supplementary battle skill was the most suitable choice.

Having decided on this point, He Yiming immediately placed the scripture of Silk Palm on the table and began to make copies.

By the dawn, he'd already copied down all the contents from its fourth layer to its sixth layer. Subsequently, after sorting out all of his noted down content and making sure that he'd not missed anything, he pushed the door open and walked out.

Outside the door, missing a night's sleep, He Quanxin was waiting for him.

He hadn't interfered in He Yiming's selection process at all. After attaining the sixth layer of the Internal Energy, one has the capability to grow by himself and could choose what to cultivate according to his own interests. However, He Quanxin had placed huge expectations on He Yiming, thus, he was quite concerned about latter's choice.

"Yiming, what did you choose?"

"Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm." He Yiming said without concealing

anything.

Upon hearing He Yiming's selection, He Quanxin's brows slightly creased, and he said:

"Yiming, right now, you should focus on your cultivation of Internal Energy. Battle skills may increase your strength by a huge amount, however, keep in mind, Internal Energy is the cornerstone of all types of cultivations. In this time phase, when you can advance your Internal Energy at so much faster rate, you'd better concentrate most of your energy on the Internal Energy." After pausing once, he continued:

"Although your second brother, Yihai, and your third brother, Yixuan, are also cultivating two battle skill simultaneously, however, their potential is much inferior to yours in terms of Internal Energy growth."

He Yiming immediately bowed his head and received his uncle's instructions, but at the same time, he also said:

"Eldest Uncle, this nephew has not copied much, just the contents of the sixth layer of the two scriptures."

Consequently, He Quanxin's face slowly relaxed, as this implied that He Yiming was nevertheless aware of prioritizing the important matters first.

After saying goodbye to He Quanxin and leaving the Book Pavilion, He Yiming habitually rushed towards the rear court. He'd already been late two days in a row and had no desire to make it three.

He'd barely taken a few steps when he ran into his third uncle He Quanyi along with a pair of his brother and sister, He Yilong and He Yitao.

Upon seeing the direction in which He Yiming was going, He Quanyi cracked a laugh as he said:

"You want to go to the rear court for the morning training?"

"Yes, third uncle." He Yiming respectfully said.

He Yilong and He Yitao exchanged a glance and smiled. Furthermore, He Yitao shouted:

"Sixth brother, you have already attained the sixth layer, you don't need to get up early for the morning training."

He Yiming blanked for an instant, before forcing out a faint smile.

He actually forgot about this matter while making copies in the Book Pavilion for the entire night.

He family rule: Cultivators at the sixth layer or above need not take part in the morning training. This was because if one's Internal Energy had attained the sixth layer, the benefits of the morning training would be next to nothing, on the other hand, one would be able to gain much more by cultivating just a little in the Internal Energy.

He Quanyi patted He Yiming's shoulders and said:

"Yiming, you can go at your own pace. I hope to see you advancing to the seventh layer as soon as possible."

He Yiming, while subconsciously nodding his head, watched his siblings and third uncle growing distant.

He retracted his vision and looked all around him before suddenly realizing that he'd apparently nowhere to go.

He didn't require to take part in the morning training he'd been doing since he was five years old, so, where should he go for the next three hours? What should he do?

Currently, his mood was very complex, seeming just like a university-graduate who'd no job. It was a feeling of loss that emerged from one's heart.

As He Yiming kneaded the notes in his bosom with his fingers, his heart once again burned with passion.

Since he didn't need to join the morning training, he could begin the cultivation of these two battle skill scriptures. He didn't know how much these two battle skill scriptures would benefit him, or to what extent his battle strength would be enhanced.

However, He Yiming was convinced, so long as he could cultivate in any one of these two battle skills, the day he ran into that fox big bear again, would be the day of that big guy's extinction.

Chapter 11 - Peak Of The Battle Skills?

In He family, every directly-related member of the younger generation had an underground basement beneath their courtyards, precisely for the training of martial skills.

He Yiming opened his basement. Although this was not his first time entering the basement, this time, his heart was racing because this was the first time he'd come here to practice martial skills.

He didn't immediately commence his training, instead, he took out the notes of Rolling Boulder Fist and carefully revised them to confirm that he'd everything in his mind. Subsequently, he placed his copied notes inside a special iron cupboard.

He Yiming retreated several steps and adopted a stance, before executing the contents of the Rolling Boulder Fist.

His Internal Energy instantaneously rushed into his palms. His both arms were crisscrossed, and he was continuously waving them one after another, at the same time, his body was also swaying according to a certain width. The Rolling Boulder Fist was definitely not the best battle skill in terms of offensive strength, however, in terms of continuous assault, it was unmatched and unrivaled in the metal-type battle skills.

If one could make full use of this skill, his entire being would surge towards the opponent like a huge rolling boulder. Especially, during contact with the opponent, if the opponent couldn't suppress it within a

short duration, it would keep on intensifying until it had struck the opponent down.

Rolling Boulder Fist had many sequences of movements, however, at the sixth layer, one could only train in a single sequence.

He Yiming was training at the center of the basement. Sometimes striking with his crisscrossed and bent arms at his front, while sometimes opening his arms wide and brandishing them in a circular manner. The entire room was echoing with the howling winds produced by his fists.

At this moment, his thoughts were completely fixed on this extraordinary battle skill. His Internal Energy was violently surging and was being drained away as if water from an open dam.

‘Ha.....Ha...’

Along with He Yiming’s continuous sequential movements, the winds produced by his fists were getting increasingly fierce. After completing the sequence once, He Yiming didn’t stop, instead, he increased the pace of his movements. Furthermore, the sequence of movements and the Internal Energy’s coordination attained a kind of extremely subtle state. The two mutually complemented each other, causing He Yiming to have a comfortable feeling like that of a fish obtaining water.

Eventually, He Yiming reached a corner of the room. At this point, by chance, he’d just finished the sequence again. With his body and mind fully immersed in training, going with the flow, his fist resolutely struck ahead.

With a bang sound, his fist heavily struck the flexible special wall of the room, causing a shallow dent to immediately appear at that spot.

He Yiming, as if awakening from a dream, returned back from his battle ambit and tongue-tied looked at the depression in front of him, as if not being able to convince himself that this was his masterpiece.

One should know this location had been specially constructed by the Family Master as a training ground for the young seedlings. The surface was molded with steel, being flexible and extremely tough. It was specially constructed for the younger generation to train in martial skills and test their cultivation.

Not to mention He Yiming had just advanced to the sixth layer, even if his Internal Energy had attained the apex of the sixth layer, he might not have been able to leave behind such a depression.

He looked at his fist. It was a little red and swelled up. He Yiming's brows slightly creased, and his Internal Energy immediately switched to water type of Ripple technique. Layer upon layer, Internal Energy flowed through the meridians in his fist. After a short while, the swelling on his fist began to subside.

He again looked at the depression in front of him and was secretly alarmed in his heart. Being able to accomplish such a feat using the sixth layer Internal Energy, only had a single explanation: bringing forth the might of the battle skill to the fullest.

As he thought up to here, his mind turned blank.

He'd just recently began to practice this metal-type technique, could it be that, in such a short amount of time period, he'd been able to cultivate this class of martial skill to the peak?

When ordinary cultivators came into contact with a martial skill of some class, they would first carefully analyze and train, only then they would slowly begin to master it. Furthermore, the might of the martial skill they could bring forth would slowly increase along with their training, only then they would finally be able to reach the peak.

However, He Yiming's circumstances seemed somewhat different. After little hesitation, he opened his copied notes and immediately looked at the description written at the top:

The peak effect of the sixth layer Rolling Boulder Fist: Capable of leaving behind depressions on pure steel.

Now He Yiming was certain that he'd displayed the optimum might of this martial skill.

He rubbed his nose while being extremely puzzled:

'Could it be that my luck is good up to such an extent that my physique is extremely compatible with Rolling Boulder Fist as well?'

'Even if this is the case, this speed is just too frightening.'

After hesitating for a bit, he eventually laid down the Rolling Boulder's notes, which seemed a thousand jin in weight, and picked up the other

martial skill, Silk Palm.

His fingers lightly caressed the notes as he pondered over it word by word.

He was certain that he hadn't touched this martial skill before, furthermore, he'd only been in touch with a water-type cultivation technique for merely two days, however, he didn't know why, but the contents of the Silk Palm felt extremely familiar to him, as if he'd cultivated in this martial skill beforehand.

He Yiming's mouth slightly twitched. He was sure that he hadn't gone insane, rather he truly understood the contents of this martial skill just by looking, and even understood it in depth. This was mere feeling, however, this feeling was extremely strong and real.

He Yiming laid down the book with a strange face and walked up to the middle of the room. The Internal Energy in his body immediately began to circulate corresponding to the water type cultivation technique, and his body began to move in a demonic manner.

Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm were two distinct techniques. One emphasized on soft and flexible defense, and attack while defending; being extremely effective in attacking by borrowing strength from the opponent. While the other was offense centralized masculine kind of technique; while confronting an opponent, one would be able to become extremely imposing, causing the opponent to not being able to display his full strength.

As He Yiming began to exhibit Silk Palm, bizarre sounds began echoing

in the entire room, seeming like hisses of a viper. Ordinary people would have been scared witless by such sounds. Furthermore, Yiming's complexion turned heavy. Although his movements seemed soft, relaxed, and didn't seem as powerful as that of the Boulder Rolling Fist, however, the force of air that was slowly rising up in the room didn't seem the least bit inferior in comparison.

Suddenly, He Yiming hurriedly took several steps as if riding on a wind-fire ball, and instantly arrived at the location where he'd recently made that dent, before emitting out a lightly fluttering palmprint.

There wasn't any sound, however, when He Yiming's palm moved up, right next to the original dent, there was another dent.

These two dents hardly seemed any different, however, their appearance seemed somewhat different.

The depression caused by the Rolling Boulder Fist was somewhat distorted. The area of the dent seemed a little bigger. This was the result of an instantaneous explosion of a strong destructive power. While the depression caused due to Silk Palm was smoother and was a bit ahead in terms of depth.

As He Yiming looked at such depression marks in this seemingly impossible to penetrate flexible-wall, he felt quite regretful. If he'd learned any of these two skills before his encounter with the fox bear, he would have definitely caused that big fellow begging for death in a single strike.

'This is the might of a martial skill. If one could bring out full potential

of a martial skill, even challenging someone of higher level might not be completely impossible.'

'But if I don't remember wrong, be it father or elder brother, they both said that cultivation of martial skills is not easier than the cultivation of the Internal Energy at all. They even said that it was simply too hard. Sometimes, bringing forth the full might of a certain kind of martial skill is even difficult than advancing in levels of the Internal Energy.'

He Yiming scratched his head. He couldn't understand at all. This was considered extremely hard?

After cultivating Silk Palm, He Yiming was certain about one thing: He had truly been able to display the might of these two techniques up to their peaks.

Because he'd been to his third brother's training room. He'd seen his third brother training with his own eyes, furthermore, he'd also seen the impressions in that room's wall.

In his opinion, both, his third brother's training process and the impressions on the wall, were inferior to that of him.

This was not an excessive faith in himself, but an extremely impartial assessment. Though, he knew that if this assessment leaked out, what awaited him would certainly not be anything good.

Because he would be absolutely incapable of explaining how could he cultivate two martial skills to the peak within a single day. Although this

was only up to the apex of the sixth layer, it was already an extremely extraordinary feat. Moreover, these were two differently attributed martial skills. Even though He Yiming was ignorant, he knew that probability of such a feat happening was much less than the chance of him running into a fox bear in the mountains.

He was feeling apprehensive. Improvement in strength was definitely a good thing, however, in his opinion, this good thing was also a burden which was hard to bear.

He had thought about informing these things to his elders, however, he gave up on doing so. He knew that such a condition of his body was too strange.

He was vaguely aware that this change had some connection with his strange encounter at the lake. After that day, his feats could no longer be covered with the word 'genius', if one insisted on looking for a word to describe his feats, that would be 'devilish'.

And this was also the true reason he absolutely didn't dare to open his mouth....

Chapter 12 - Father's Return

After properly collecting the notes, He Yiming left the training room. He was extremely pleased with the results of today's training, in fact, he was so pleased that he was feeling a bit apprehensive.

He opened the door of his compound. The sun was already a bit inclined towards the west. He patted his stomach as he felt extremely hungry. Too much time had passed while he was cultivating the battle skills.

As he thought about getting something from the manor's kitchen to eat, he suddenly saw a familiar figure entering his yard.

He Yiming blinked his eyes, and his face immediately revealed a pleasantly surprised expression as he shouted:

"Dad, you have returned?"

This middle-aged man with a circular face, thick and short mustache, high-pitched nose, eyes that can't be considered big, dense hair, and a fair white complexion, was the individual who managed the business of He family in the county town.

At this moment, He Quanming's eyes were glittering with a joyous splendor. After he'd received the letter, he set aside all the current matters and immediately rushed back to home at the fastest possible speed.

Again a member of clan's third generation had advanced to the sixth layer, furthermore, that member was his own son, He Yiming, who was barely thirteen years old. Being one of the core members of the clan, he was extremely clear on what did this represent. This represented that future of his child was nothing short of extraordinary.

"Yiming, come."

The first thing He Quanming did after entering the yard was to extend his palm. He Yiming faintly shook his head. He truly couldn't understand why each of these elders must check for themselves before they would be convinced. As he recalled, his second brother or third brother didn't get to enjoy such treatment at all.

He helplessly extended his own palm and pressed against his father's big palm. The Internal Energy of both sides erupted out at the same time. Of course, under the control of both sides, this Internal Energy remained concentrated and didn't scatter away, and was immediately restrained after a light contact.

Eventually, the smiling expression on He Quanming's face completely unfolded, and his eyes revealed a prideful expression as he looked at He Yiming.

Suddenly, He Yiming felt slightly apprehensive. He knew that his breakthrough was not completely a result of his own efforts, so, would this kind of good fortune continue to shine on him in future?

"Yiming, you are indeed good." After a long time, He Quanming

restrained his smiling expression and said in a solemn voice:

"However, you cannot be complacent. Continue on striving, and try to attain the seventh layer before the age of twenty like your eldest brother."

"Yes, daddy." He Yiming cautiously said: "Your child will definitely work hard."

He Quanming said in a satisfied voice:

"I am coming from your eldest uncle's place. He said you have selected two martial skills."

He Yiming faintly nodded and stealthily looked at his father's expression. Only after he saw that his father's expression wasn't that of rebuke at all did he breathe easy.

However, He Quanming's words suddenly took a turn:

"Yiming, I know that you all really look forward to martial skills, however, I wish you to only learn a single battle skill."

"A single class?" He Yiming astonishedly asked.

"Yes. Going by your age, you have a promising future ahead you. This is a good time to advance by leaps and bounds in the Internal Energy cultivation. Martial skills are just a side story. As long as your Internal Energy is profound, you can cultivate strong martial skills at any time." He

Quanming's voice was heavy as he said:

"You can cultivate up to the sixth layer at the age of thirteen; you must not waste such a talent and opportunity."

"That's right." A voice came from behind He Quanming. He Yiming raised his head and saw that his third uncle, He Quanyin, had already come inside his yard. The latter continued:

"Yiming, cultivating battle skills is no easy feat. Being proficient in even a single battle skills requires a great deal of time and effort. For current you, its gain will fall short of losses." He paused for an instant, before supplementing:

"To tell you the truth, those people who wholeheartedly devote themselves in cultivating battle skills are the ones who don't have much confidence in their talent of Internal Energy cultivation, thus, they give their all in the cultivation of battle skills. Your grandfather, eldest uncle, and eldest brother, all of them spends most of their time on Internal Energy cultivation. This is the correct path for us cultivators."

He Quanming, who was hearing at the side, repeatedly nodded his head. However, both the brothers had faint expressions of envy and admiration in their eyes.

Indescribably, He Yiming faintly realized that these expressions of his father and second uncle were in the light of his eldest uncle's talent. After all, his eldest uncle was the only individual from the clan's second and third generation who'd attained the ninth layer in Internal Energy.

In his mind, He Yiming asked:

'Does cultivating a battle skill to the peak truly requires a lot of time? I seem to have cultivated two differently attributed battle skills to the apex of the sixth layer within half a day?'

He Quanyi paused for a moment, then suddenly spoke: "Second brother you still don't seem convinced. You can try on your own."

"I just found this hard to believe." He Quanming bitterly smiled. He just never expected that his small son would give him such a huge surprise.

He Quanyi resolutely said:

"Second brother, congratulations to you anyhow. Yiming's future accomplishments will not be any less than Yitian; he will be our clan's future pillar."

The two brothers continued to talk and heartily laugh. Their laughter was free and unrestrained.

After a bit of hesitation, He Yiming suddenly asked:

"Father, third uncle, if one wishes to cultivate a battle skill to its apex, how much time would be required in the end?"

Both the brothers exchanged a glance, while being slightly concerned and thinking:

‘As expected, this child, He Yiming, is more interested in battle skills than Internal Energy.’

However, this was not just He Yiming’s problem. Almost every youngster of his age had a similar attitude.

He Quanming slightly sighed and said:

“He Yiming, battle skills are like Internal Energy and rely primarily on the fact whether or not cultivator’s physique suits the battle skill’s cultivation technique. So the results of cultivation will somewhat vary from person to person. To cultivate a martial skill to the apex of one step, one would require a year if fast, ten years if slow; it might even take several tens of years.”

He Yiming faintly opened his mouth and said with an expression of not knowing whether to laugh or cry:

“One year is required to cultivate a martial skill to the peak?”

He Quanming glared at him for a moment, before solemnly speaking:

“Yiming, don’t bite off more than you can chew. Cultivating a battle skill up to the peak of one’s current level within a year is already an amazing speed. Your third brother’s water-type Internal Energy as well as physique is extremely compatible with the cultivation technique of Silk Palm, only then was he able to cultivate Silk Palm up to the apex of the sixth level within a year. In the family, he is the fastest individual in terms of

cultivating battle skills.”

He Quanyi suddenly stepped forward and said, standing right in front of He Yiming:

“Yiming, your third brother attained the sixth layer after fifteen years. His potential is more or less about your father and me. That’s the reason we allow him to put all of his energy into the cultivation of martial skills. However, you are different. You still have a huge room for improvement. Therefore, I hope you will treat the Internal Energy cultivation as your main objective; battle skills are secondary, you understand?”

He Yiming immediately straightened his chest and said in a loud voice:

“Yes, third uncle. I understand.”

Though his voice was loud and clear, in his heart, he was thinking, if his dad and uncle were to found that, within a single day, he’d cultivated metal-type Rolling Boulder Fist and water-type Silk Palm to the peak of the sixth layer, what would they think?

Even though He Yiming’s guts were not less, at this critical juncture, he kept his mouth sealed like a jar. He’d no intentions of leaking anything.

He shifted his vision and changed the topic:

“Dad you are here, what about mother?”

He Quanming faintly smiled as he said:

"We can't have no one at the shop in the county town. Since I am here, your mother would obviously be left behind there. Why? You miss her?"

He Yiming heavily nodded and said:

"Yes, I miss her."

He Quanming stepped forward and lightly stroked his hair a few times as he said:

"Don't worry. After a month or two, me and your mother, both, will return and spend a few days with you all. However, in the meantime, you all must work hard. Don't disappoint me and your mother."

He Yiming patted his small and immature chest and said:

"Dad, you can rest easy, I will not let any of you lose face."

He Quanming heartily laughed and said:

"I believe you, little genius."

He Quanyi turned and said:

"Second brother, because of the family matters, you and second sister-

in-law are constantly moving back and forth. It even delays your cultivation. How about you return back to the manor for a while, and let me handle the shop in the city."

He Quanming waved his hand and said:

"Third brother, you and eldest brother are not cut out for business. If the shop is handed over to you two, I'm afraid we won't even be left with our original assets."

He Quanyi's face was slightly red. However, his complexion was rather dark, thus, it couldn't be seen easily.

He Quanming lightly patted on his shoulder and said:

"Third brother. Our roots lie here. As long as you manage this place properly, and let eldest brother cultivate without having to worry about family troubles, we will never fall in the county. Furthermore, if eldest brother is able to breakthrough to the tenth layer, then with two tenth-level Internal Energy masters as eldest brother and father, our He family would be second to none in the county town. If that happens, then even Xu family and lord Cheng's family won't dare to have coveting thoughts about our family."

After hesitating for a long time, He Quanyi lightly nodded and said:

"I understand. However, before eldest brother's breakthrough, we will have to trouble you, second brother, for all the external matters."

He Quanming, with his grandeur reaching the clouds, extended both his hands and lightly waved. A light sound like a thunderclap was suddenly produced in the air.

“Third brother, be at ease. In any case, I am also a cultivator of the eighth layer, not a pushover.”

Two brothers exchanged a glance and began to laugh heartily. Their laughter was full of an unspeakable grandeur.

As He Yiming watched them, unknowingly, a warmth surged in his heart and instantly spread across his entire body, seeming as if he wanted to join them.

Without knowing it himself, he'd already decided to increase his cultivation as soon as he could and assist his father and the rest.

Chapter 13 - Sixth Layer Bottleneck

In the process of visiting his son, He Quanming stayed the night and hurriedly left the next morning.

After his father's visit, He Yiming was brimming with vigor. Like his elder brothers who'd attained the sixth layer, he wholeheartedly devoted himself to cultivation.

For miscellaneous jobs, there were many servants in the He family manor. However, He Yiming didn't have his personal servant. In order to temper the character of the third generation, they were not allowed to have a luxurious lifestyle such as someone feeding them when they opened their mouth or someone changing their clothes when they stretched their hands. However, at least, they didn't have to worry about the basic needs. They didn't need to think about cooked food or clean clothes.

Only under this kind of conditions, these experts would be able to wholeheartedly temper their Internal Energy or battle skills.

In a flash, almost half a year peacefully passed by.

On this day, He Yiming walked out of his small courtyard. As he saw servants diligently sweeping away not too far from him, his mood suddenly turned somewhat gloomily.

In this time period of half a year, he hadn't wasted a single day.

He'd invested all of his energy into tempering his Internal Energy. He had been pleasantly surprised; his cultivation of both Primordial Energy and Ripple technique was progressing smoothly. Step by step, his Internal Energy was stably improving. An even more astonishing thing was that his water-type Internal Energy and metal-type Internal Energy could inter-transform as if these two were not two different-attributed techniques, but techniques with the same attribute. With a certain improvement in either of the techniques, the other would also receive a corresponding improvement.

Although He Yiming was young and hadn't experienced much on the path of cultivation, even a fool could tell that this kind of thing was anything but normal. Of course, he'd no intention of showing off, and he chose to silently bury down everything in his memory.

As for the two martial skills....

To tell the truth, apart from practicing them a few times, He Yiming didn't pay attention to them.

Not because he'd took the conversation with his father and uncle to his heart, rather because he'd already cultivated both the skills to the peak of the sixth layer. At this point, even if he tried to cultivate again, he wouldn't be able to advance a single bit.

Of course, along with the constant improvement in his Internal Energy, the might displayed by the two battle skills also received a corresponding improvement. This was not due to the battle skills themselves, but due to the improvement in his Internal Energy. Therefore,

except practising battle skills occasionally so as to prevent himself from losing touch, he didn't dwell on these anymore.

After spending almost half a year like this, he again encountered a bottleneck.

However, this time, he didn't tell anyone. Attaining the apex of the sixth layer and even reaching the bottleneck within six months? He knew that such an affair was absolutely unique.

One should be aware that difficulty in cultivation keeps on increasing. At higher levels, if one wishes to continuously improve like during lower levels, that would be an extremely wishful thinking.

His eldest brother, He Yitian, advanced to the sixth layer at the age of fourteen. However, to attain the peak of the sixth layer, he had to spend five more years. Furthermore, in the final year, by extreme luck, he unfathomably crossed over the bottleneck of the sixth layer and successfully advanced to the seventh layer at the age of nineteen.

And this was already the fastest speed in the He family. Even his eldest uncle only attained the seventh layer by the age of twenty years.

As for his second brother and third brother, although both of them had attained the sixth layer earlier than He Yiming, they were still painstakingly cultivating at this step as of now. Not to mention the bottleneck of the sixth layer, they were still quite far off from the peak of the sixth layer.

He Yiming was different. In the previous two days, he clearly felt that his Internal Energy was absolutely incapable of increasing. Furthermore, he was feeling the same as he did at the bottleneck of the fifth layer.

This feeling was extremely clear at this moment, while it was indistinct during the fifth layer bottleneck. This stark contrast allowed He Yiming to clearly differentiate between his current level and that of before.

After painstakingly cultivating for two days and not being able to make the slightest improvement, He Yiming walked out of his room in frustration.

He Yiming left the manor to take a stroll, subconsciously walking in the direction of the big lake.

Soon after, he arrived at the lake's edge. He watched the glistening lake water as it faintly rippled and swayed. His heart was just like the surface of the lake; uncontrollable and unstable. A wind blew past, and the surface of the water which had just calmed down again rippled.

He Yiming softly sighed, and his mouth curled into a self-mocking smile.

He was able to successfully cross over the last time's bottleneck after encountering hundreds of perplexing incidents inside this lake. At that time, although he'd almost seen King Yama, he was able to make a crucial breakthrough. However, being able to obtain such an opportunity once in one's entire life was already amazing. Although he was hopeful in his mind, he knew that such good luck would not befall him for the second time.

Sitting by the lake, he was unable to stop himself from thinking about that day's events.

Although almost half a year had passed since then, to him, that day's events still seemed as clear as if they were before his eyes; impossible to forget

He remembered that after that incident and returning back to the manor, he'd had begun to cultivate Ripple technique at the night. And on that same night, he obtained a success that one would long for even in dreams and attained the realm of sixth layer.

Suddenly, He Yiming's thoughts stirred and an idea streaked through his mind like a lightning. He was faintly aware that this idea was extremely significant and may very well be the most important thing which would affect his entire life. However, unfortunately, he just had an indistinct feeling of this idea and was unable to properly hold onto it.

Sitting by the lake and watching faint ripples on the surface of the lake, his thoughts ran wild as he pondered deeply. However, he was unable to gain anything.

A flat rock flew past not too far away from his body and bounced a few times on the surface of the lake, before sinking in the water.

Astonished, He Yiming turned his head around and his vision landed on his younger brother who had a huge smile plastered across his face.

He Yiming faintly shook his head and looked at the sky, consequently realizing that the morning training was over.

"Yi Tao, you are still playing here; quickly go back to study. If you skip lessons, third uncle will peel off your skin." He Yiming scolded with a smile. Everyone in the manor, except his third uncle, doted on this younger brother of him.

He Yitao ran towards He Yiming while jumping and bouncing in a monkey-like manner and sat down beside him, before saying:

"Six brother, father said that today is a holiday for me. You, on the other hand, have finally shown yourself. In these past few months, you have almost turned into an even bigger of a cultivation freak than the eldest brother."

He Yiming bitterly laughed. He truly didn't know how to explain his younger brother. Though he was sure that if their positions were reversed, latter would become even bigger freak than him.

"Sixth brother, how is your cultivation going?" He Yitao casually asked:

"Are you sure you will be able to reach the sixth layer's peak, or the bottleneck, within next four years?"

He Yiming muttered to himself. He knew that if he told his younger brother that he'd already attained the bottleneck of the sixth layer, latter would certainly create a big fuss and tell everyone about it.

He faintly shook his head and sighed, before saying:

“How cultivating sixth layer’s Internal Energy could be so easy? You will know when you attain the sixth layer.”

Upon hearing He Yiming’s words, He Yitao’s whole face was covered with expectations; even his eyes were twinkling like stars. However, this expression only remained for a very brief instant on his face, before completely dissipating. He listlessly said:

“Sixth brother, I wish. But father said neither do I have your or eldest brother’s talent nor hard work. I am too lacking in terms of cultivation compared to you guys. He said my thinking is sharp and insights extraordinary. I have the demeanor like that of second uncle’s younger days. Therefore, I am asked to study a lot of books, so that, in future, I could take over family’s business.”

He Yiming opened his mouth. He could make out his younger brother’s unwillingness, however, he was also helpless.

For cultivators, the requirements of talent are extremely high. Not suitable means not suitable. It doesn’t have an explanation, and neither it can be changed.

He Yitao’s temperament was indeed childish since he seemed lively again after a brief silence. He looked all around and moved closer to He Yiming’s ear, before saying in a low voice:

“Sixth brother, let me tell you something. Though second uncle is so

earnest now, but in his younger days, he was as naughty as me, and has the most number of beatings from grandfather to his name .”

He Yiming didn’t know whether to laugh or to cry. He Yitao wouldn’t likely lie to him, but it was really hard to imagine that his father was such a character in his younger days. It was truly unimaginable.

However, He Yiming had no intention to ask his father for a conformation. His buttocks were not itching for a beating.

He Yitao again picked up a flat stone from the ground, lowered his waist, before throwing it. It once again created many ripples on the surface of the lake.

“Sixth brother, are you still cultivating Ripple technique?”

He Yiming was blanked for a moment, before he asked:

“What did you say?”

“Which technique are you cultivating at present. It ought to be Primordial Energy.” After looking at He Yiming, who seemed like a wooden puppet, He Yitao asked:

“Sixth brother you are not actually cultivating Ripple technique, are you?”

Excitement shone in He Yiming’s eyes, and his originally dead water like

eyes were alive once again.

He turned around and tightly embraced He Yitao, before saying:

"Yitao, thank you."

After saying these words, despite former's puzzled and astonished expression, he turned around and dashed towards the manor.

Left behind He Yitao, who'd another stone in his hand which he was just about to throw, was tongue-tied looking at He Yiming's departing figure, with a mind full of questions:

'Why would sixth brother thank me?'

'Don't tell me some problem in his cultivation has fried his brain.'

Chapter 14 - Skin Tightening Technique.

He Yiming returned back to the manor at the maximum possible speed and hurried to his eldest uncle's place, which was the courtyard where the Book Pavilion was situated.

As he entered the courtyard, his footsteps immediately halted and his eyes turned a lot more attentive.

Apparently, he somehow felt a strong pressure. This pressure was specifically directed at him. After a short duration, this pressure dissipated without a trace.

This courtyard was one of the most significant locations in the estate and was incomparable to the small and insignificant courtyard he lived in. Apart from the main hall, it had two side halls. The pressure just now was coming from one of these two halls.

He Yiming faintly shook his head, and the face of his eldest uncle, He Yiquanxin, appeared in his mind. He had a feeling that the recent pressure must have come from his eldest uncle's attentive gaze, and after looking at him, the former had withdrawn his gaze.

He didn't know how he came up with this thought, but he couldn't get it out of his mind.

After hesitating a bit, he didn't go to the side hall to pay his respects to his eldest uncle, and instead directly entered the main hall, where He family's collection of books existed.

In the third generation, anyone who had attained the sixth layer was qualified to enter this place to, check out or select, Internal Energy techniques. Everyone obviously knew the principle of 'biting off more than one can chew'. This was also the reason that this was only He Yiming's second visit here.

After He Yiming entered the main hall, in the side hall, He Quanxin's brows creased, and a faint suspicious expression emerged on his face. He had already discovered He Yiming when the latter had entered the courtyard. Thus, he distantly watched him. However, the movements displayed by He Yiming astonished him. Especially when He Yiming glanced towards his place, he almost doubted whether He Yiming had become aware of his gaze.

However, the next instant, he discarded this thought.

'He Yiming is merely a sixth layer Internal Energy cultivator, so how could he discover my gaze? This is merely me being excessively suspicious. He Yiming must have casually come here, so, he thought about paying his respects to me, but since he was afraid that I am in closed-door cultivation, he didn't dare disturb me.'

After being convinced of this reasoning, He Quanxin's mind eased up, and he once again focussed his attention on his cultivation.

He Yiming pushed the door and entered the Book Pavillion. The books were methodically arranged. Although the bookshelves were not small, the number of books was quite lacking.

He Yiming, without pausing, directly walked up to a random bookshelf and casually selected a book.

As he opened it, he couldn't help but be a little surprised.

Skin Tightening technique. A wood type supplementary Internal Energy scripture.

He bitterly laughed in his mind. How did he end up choosing such a book?

All types of techniques in any attribute were divided into three categories. In addition to primary Internal Energy cultivation techniques, there were battle skills and a few supplementary type cultivation techniques.

Not much is needed to say about primary Internal Energy techniques or battle skills. One was the basis of cultivation, while the other increased one's battle strength. For cultivators, both of these were extremely crucial.

The third kind of techniques didn't seem that important. For example, this wood-type Internal Energy supplementing technique, the Skin Hardening technique, allowed cultivators to tighten their skin and increase their defensive capabilities to a certain degree. In addition, this skill had another strange use. After cultivating this technique to a profound level, one would be able to cluster the layers of facial skin together and change appearance to some degree.

However, cultivating this technique to such a profound realm was no

easy feat. The amount of effort one had to put in would not be worth the gains. Therefore, even though this technique was not rare, people cultivating in it were extremely few. At least in He family estate, probably no one cultivated in this technique.

He Yiming was about to put it back, however, his thoughts suddenly stirred.

By the lake, after hearing his ninth brother's words, that indistinct idea had suddenly begun to clear up in He Yiming's mind.

After his fortuitous encounter inside the lake, he began to cultivate a new technique, the Ripple technique. And while cultivating a new technique, he was able to successfully cross the bottleneck of the fifth layer. Subsequently, like a boat rises along with a tide, his metal-type Internal Energy also advanced along with his other technique.

However, was he able to advance because he'd cultivated a new technique?

He Yiming was not completely certain, however, this method, at least, deserved a try.

Therefore, he hurried back to the manor and made a decision that he would cultivate whichever technique he selected.

However, he didn't expect that he would randomly select a supplementary technique. Perhaps this was the will of heavens.

After pondering for a short while, He Yiming moderated his thoughts and didn't place the book back, but instead started to copy it down on the table in the centre of the room.

The book didn't have much content, thus, He Yiming didn't have to exert much effort. Furthermore, his Internal Energy had reached the apex of the sixth layer and was touching the bottleneck for the next level, thus, his eyesight and wrist control had naturally improved a lot. With the brush in his hand flying like a serpent-dragon, he was finished copying everything in an hour.

He placed the original book back to its place and walked out with the new book.

If he'd been at a big clan or big sect, even walking out with copies would not have been easy. However, this was an insignificant matter in the He family. No one stopped him or made inquiries as he left the building. All the children themselves would also not take the original scripture outside the room.

Actually, they didn't know that all the scriptures in the Book Pavilion were also copies. The original ones were with their old man. Otherwise, the rules here would not have been so relaxed.

Upon returning back to his place, He Yiming closed the door and stuck a wooden stick in between, signifying that he was cultivating behind closed doors and should not be disturbed.

He entered his room and opened the recently copied Skin Tightening technique, before silently reading out the contents inside his mind and

contemplating the meaning behind every word.

This was the most important task for a cultivator while starting on a new technique. First, a cultivator must carefully study and research the technique, before training in it. If one attempts to rush to the cultivation part after getting hands on an Internal Energy technique, the conclusion would definitely not be anything good.

Little by little, He Yiming eventually finished reading the book.

While thinking about the meaning behind the words, he soon discovered that this type of supplementary technique was, both, very easy and very hard.

Supplementary type techniques were not like the primary techniques which intensified Internal Energy. Therefore, cultivation of such techniques relied on one's' original Internal Energy. Supplementary techniques were same as battle techniques in this respect.

However, in comparison to the battle skills, the course of supplementary techniques was much simpler at the beginning. In He Yiming's opinion, with his sixth level Internal Energy, this technique's initial cultivation would not be difficult at all and would be much easier than the cultivation of battle skills.

However, along with the improvement in the Internal Energy, the cultivation of supplementary techniques would become increasingly difficult. For cultivating this technique to the extent of being able to change appearance, one had to possess Internal Energy of ninth level, and even after that, one would have to exert an enormous effort to

succeed.

Furthermore, circulating Internal Energy on the face was an extremely challenging task. Without being a genius in this respect, extremely few people would be able to accomplish this task.

In comparison, cultivating battle skills was not so challenging in the later stages.

Upon comprehending all of these things, He Yiming let out a long sigh.

‘No wonder so few people cultivate in such techniques. This is simply a chicken rib. [1]’

[tl: [1] = Not worth it.]

Faintly shaking his head, He Yiming decided to cultivate this technique nevertheless. In any case, his aim was not to cultivate another technique but to verify his hypothesis.

As a precaution, he went down in his training room. As he was about to begin his training, he suddenly had a strange feeling.

A sixth layer cultivator, cultivating two differently attributed main techniques, and currently intending to cultivate his third secondary technique? If he told someone else, he would instantly be labelled as lunatic on the spot.

After mockingly smiling at himself once, He Yiming moderated his thoughts and began to slowly circulate his Internal Energy according to his notes.

The beginning of the Skin Tightening technique was extremely easy. Anyone with a foundation in Internal Energy would be able to cultivate to some extent. Though, the same cannot be said about obtaining results.

After He Yiming entered his cultivation state, his Internal Energy began to travel according to the course mentioned in the scripture at an unimaginable speed.

Along with his Internal Energy flowing through the meridians, the skin on his body automatically began to tighten, seeming like old patches of skin.

Although the defensive capability produced by such a skin-tightening was not too good, on the first try, being able to obtain such accomplishments and a result which almost felt like a labor of cultivation of countless times, was enough to frighten anyone.

Eventually, after Yiming began to feel faint stabs of pain coming from his Internal Energy, he stopped cultivating.

He knew that these faint stabs of pain implied that, after this point, his body couldn't keep up with this technique's Internal Energy consumption. If he wished to further cultivate this technique, he would have to advance to the next step.

He opened his eyes and patted his hands, before silently feeling the state of the Internal Energy inside his body. Gradually, a faint yet extremely strange expression emerged on his face.

Chapter 15 - Seventh Layer.

As he silently observed the state of his Internal Energy, he accidentally made an observation, of which he could not convince himself.

Two days ago, his Internal Energy was at the peak of the sixth layer and was touching the bottleneck. Generally speaking, before attaining the next layer, his Internal Energy would strictly remain within this realm, and regardless of how he cultivated, it will not increase a single bit.

However, He Yiming discovered that his Internal Energy had slightly increased compared to when he cultivated yesterday. But, he didn't sense any of the two of his cultivation techniques attaining the seventh layer.

He Yiming bitterly smiled. He wasn't even sure if this truly was the case. Perhaps this was just his sweet expectation, when in truth, his Internal Energy had not increased at all.

After a bit of thinking, his eyes suddenly shined. The Internal Energy inside his body once again surged and began to circulate according to the course of Primordial Energy; the technique he was most familiar with.

Just after a short while, a scorching hot portion of his Internal Energy had already completed circulating through the familiar course of the sixth layer. This was the result of his recent six months of hard work.

Previously, at this point, He Yiming would stop on his own accord. He knew that after this was the unfamiliar course of the seventh layer. Even when he'd tried to attack the bottleneck two days ago, it seemed akin to

a lofty mountain. He'd absolutely no chance of the breakthrough.

However, what about this time?

He Yiming, without the slightest hesitation, concentrated this portion of Internal Energy and rushed it fearlessly, as if looking calmly at the death, towards the bottleneck of the sixth layer

The Internal energy stopped at the entrance of the bottleneck. The bottleneck still seemed impenetrable like an iron wall. However, He Yiming was not discouraged. He could tell that the exhaustion of his Internal Energy's power after reaching up to this point differed in comparison with the previous times. To his surprise, he felt as though he still had some energy left.

(TI: This energy is not Internal Energy. This is general energy. Basically, he felt like he still had, energy/power/strength, remaining to perform some other task.)

Immediately, all the Internal Energy in his body berserkly rushed towards this location, while the coming Internal Energy was being accumulated at the same time.

When all the Internal Energy in his body was concentrated at a single point, that towering sixth layer's wall eventually loosened. Especially, after the last bit of the Internal Energy entered within, seeming as though the last straw pressing down the camel's back, this bottleneck, that had frustrated him to no extent, completely fell apart

Along with an apparent echo of a tinkling sound in his ears, the powerful Internal Energy, like a water rushing out of a broken dam, flooded through and began circulating through the course of Primordial Energy's seventh layer like a hot knife cutting through butter.

After one complete circulation through the seventh layer's course, He Yiming restrained his Internal Energy and slowly withdrew it back into his Dantian.

He slowly opened his eyes, which had an ecstatic expression that couldn't be put into words.

He truly had advanced to the seventh layer. Furthermore, the process of breakthrough had given him a surprise. Since he could advance two layers by cultivating two new Internal Energy technique, what about the next ranks?

At this instant, He Yiming was looking at a smooth road ahead him. His future path was, unconditionally, a huge road that was being illuminated in a golden radiance.

He took in a deep breath and forced down the ecstasy in his heart.

Half an hour later, he once again circulated his Internal Energy and began to attack the Ripple technique's seventh layer. This time's result caused him to be unable to contain his joy.

When his Internal Energy had arrived at the course of Ripple technique's seventh layer, it had split opened the bottleneck with almost

no effort and had automatically entered the course of Ripple technique's seventh layer.

He'd to exert so much effort while attacking Primordial Energy's seventh layer. He had to accumulate his entire Internal Energy before attacking the bottleneck. However, when one of his primary technique advanced, apparently, the advancement in the other technique became natural and just.

However, He Yiming knew that this was not natural and just in any way.

Not to mention Primordial Energy and Ripple technique were two differently attributed techniques, such a phenomenon was absolutely impossible to occur even among two techniques of same attributes.

Eventually, he discarded all the questions out of his mind.

As long as he could advance, he didn't need to care much about these things. For these matters which were far beyond his comprehension, He Yiming decided to ignore them. From his perspective, this bizarre transformation had nothing but numerous advantages.

Applying a slight pressure on the ground through his feet, his entire figure jumped like a spring, and with the passage of a thought, he arrived at the corner of the training room, specialized for testing strength.

This surface's wall, in addition to being flexible, could also be used to test the might of the battle skills by the members of the third generation who were above the sixth layer

At this moment, the surface already had ten depressions, caused by He Yiming with the help of Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm. Although he reached the peak of these battle skills at the very beginning, along with the constant progression of his Internal Energy, the depth of these depressions had correspondingly increased; lasting until two days ago, when he made the two depressions that displayed the maximum might of these two battle skills' sixth layer.

He Yiming hesitatingly looked at the two deepest depressions for a moment, before he concentrated his Internal Energy and resolutely punched the wall.

Along with a loud sound, another depression, which was much deeper than the previous two deepest depressions, appeared on the wall. He Yiming's face immediately revealed a pleasantly surprised expression. He had not used either of the battle skills; it was merely an attack that made use of the basic properties of Primordial Energy's seventh layer.

However, from the result, the destructive power of a casual attack of the seventh layer was far above than that of a sixth layer battle skill's extreme.

Of course, this was because the battle skills used by He Yiming were ordinary ones. Reportedly, the might of some battle skills could even exceed ten times that of another battle skill at the same level. However, these were just things of legends; at least, none of such exaggerated battle skills were present in He family's Book Pavilion.

He Yiming was ecstatic. Just a basic attack contained such a might, then after learning the seventh layer's movements of Rolling Boulder Fist

and Silk palm?

As soon as he thought up to this point, he suddenly became as impatient as if he was on fire. He turned around, dashed ahead, and arrived at the entrance of his yard, before suddenly stopping.

He suddenly thought of an issue. He'd just come back from the Book Pavilion, so if he immediately went back, that would only evoke his eldest uncle's suspicion, and if the latter managed to get something out of him, that would not be good for him at all.

He looked at the dim color of the sky and dragged his body back to his apartment, before forcing himself to lie on the bed and trying to moderate his thoughts with deep breaths. Slowly, he entered the dreamland.

At the dawn of the next morning, when He Yiming woke up, he was satisfied by his yesterday's display. He once again restrained himself from directly going to the Book Pavilion. Instead, he first went to have an early breakfast, following which, he unhurriedly went to the Book Pavilion, where his eldest uncle kept watch.

This time, his display was hundred percent ordinary as he entered the courtyard, unlike the yesterday's anxious movements. But he still faintly perceived his eldest uncle's two sharp eyes briefly glancing at him from the side hall.

Still, He Yiming's self-control was pretty good. He entered the main hall in large strides as if hadn't noticed his eldest uncle's gaze at all. His today's conduct allowed He Quanxin to verify his yesterday's theory as

well. The latter was not able to sense He Yiming's super strong perception.

After entering the hall, He Yiming, by experience, easily found the scriptures of both Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm.

Subsequently, he copied down all the content of both the scriptures' seventh layer. This all didn't require much of his time. Due to the sudden boost in his Internal Energy, his movements were naturally much quicker than before.

He Yiming placed the original stuff back to its position and stuck the copied contents close to his body, before leaving the courtyard in slow steps.

He was both glad and surprised at his eldest uncle's lack of presence.

He'd prepared himself for his eldest uncle's possible interrogation. Since his eldest uncle had not shown himself, he would naturally not go and ask for trouble.

Upon returning back to his training room, he brought out his copied stuff and began the customary process of word-by-word contemplation.

After a good while, he lifted his head up, seeming like he'd some understanding of these contents.

In reality, comprehending by looking at the scriptures of these so called battle skills was not challenging. However, following the instructions and

meeting the conditions mentioned in the book was a different matter.

By looking at a painter's painting, the absolute majority could make out its perfect resemblance to the actual thing. They could shout words of praises, however, if asked to imitate the same, that would be as difficult as ascending the heavens.

Same applies for the cultivators concerning any technique. Cultivating a battle skill to seventh layer's peak would be much more difficult than the sixth layer's.

Though, this determined rule, when placed on He Yiming, completely lost its effect.

Half a day. Half a day was all it took for him to completely comprehend the seventh layers of Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm, both, and attain their respective peaks. A small matter was that he couldn't bring forth their complete might since he'd just attained the seventh layer.

Looking at the two profound depressions on the flexible wall, He Yiming had a clear understanding of his capabilities.

In the younger generation, his capability was hardly any different than his eldest brother already.

Chapter 16 - Fugitive

The sun had set. Pressed in between the blue-stoned, horse-shaped corbel walls, the night seemed narrow and deep. However, today, He family manor's grand hall was well lit.

When He Yiming hurriedly arrived at the main hall, he discovered that he was not the first one to arrive.

A month had passed since his breakthrough to the seventh layer. He had not informed anyone about his condition. All of his elders thought that he was still at the sixth layer.

Today, during his daily cultivation, a servant reported him that the Old Master had summoned him in the main hall.

Not daring to be neglectful, He Yiming hurried off to the main hall. However, upon arriving, he found out that he wasn't the first person to arrive. Both his second brother and third brother had already arrived.

He Yihai faintly nodded towards him and said: "Sixth brother, you are here as well."

"Hello, second brother." He Yiming faintly bowed his head. Although He Yihai was the son of the eldest uncle, he treated all of his younger brothers more or less about the same. To tell the truth, setting aside He Yiming's relationship with his fifth brother, the rest of his siblings were quite harmonious with each other.

Of course, the blood relations are always somewhat different than the normal, but in He family this was not too distinct.

He Yihai silently nodded without replying. He Yiming knew that the nature of his second brother was as such. If not for the affection between the siblings, he would not even have bothered with the greetings.

He Yiming took a few steps and shifted to his third brother's side, before quietly saying:

"Third brother, what happened? Why are you both here?"

He Yixuan forced a bitter laugh and shrugged his shoulders, before saying:

"I don't know. However, since grandfather has personally summoned us, it's definitely not something small."

He Yiming faintly nodded. He was about to speak, when he suddenly sensed something. His mouth immediately closed, and his vision turned towards the main hall's entrance.

After a short while, from the faint illumination outside the entrance, a few people emerged.

Upon looking at these few men, He Yiming and the rest two immediately stood up. They straightened their chest and waist,

displaying an extremely attentive appearance.

The first was the individual who'd single-handedly established He family estate, He Wude. Behind his body was He Yiming's eldest uncle, He Quanxin, and the third uncle, He Quanyin. The last person was precisely the individual appraised to be the number one figure among the third generation, He Yitian.

All three inside the hall were flabbergasted. 'What on earth has happened?'

Almost all of the dispensable power in the manor was gathered together.

He Yiming's vision turned towards the Book Pavilion for an instant. According to his knowledge, in addition to a directly related son of the Old Master, an old servant's cultivation had also attained the ninth layer; almost on par with the former. Apparently, this old servant had grown by the side of the Old Master and was nothing like an ordinary servant.

He'd always lived in the one of the side halls of the Book Pavilion's courtyard alongside He Yiming's eldest uncle. His status was not the slightest bit less than the third generation.

Today, inside the He family manor, except this special servant, all the disciples who'd attained the sixth layer were gathered together in the main hall.

He Wude entered the hall in huge strides and sat down on the middle

seat. His clear and piercing eyes swept through the remaining people, and as it did, the individual faced with his gaze felt a strange burning sensation in his body and had to lower his head.

He Yiming's heart slightly trembled. This was the Internal Energy at tenth layer's peak. Current him was not capable of resisting it in the slightest.

He silently lowered his vision as he absolutely didn't want to attract anybody's attention.

"I called you all here. There is a matter that requires your attention." Despite looking a bit old, He Wude's powerful voice echoed in the main hall:

"Today, people from Cheng family came to our place. A feudal fugitive is in our county. They want us to help the authorities in catching or killing the fugitive."

He Yiming exchanged a glance with his third brother. With his thoughts racing, he glanced at his elders and eldest brother. Their expressions didn't have the slightest change. Clearly, they were already aware of this matter.

"The fugitive is from the Linqiu region. His name is Hubin, and he is a fifth layer Internal Energy cultivator. Reportedly, his skill is pretty good."

He Yiming immediately realized.

'No wonder grandfather agreed and gathered all of us here.'

Fifth layer of the Internal Energy was not bad, however, all the people present were at least at the sixth layer. With some helpers, arresting him could be accomplished pretty easily.

In fact, this was a hard-to-come-by opportunity for the He family manor's disciples to temper themselves.

Always living behind closed doors and not having actual combat experience would not benefit their future cultivation.

He Wude's vision suddenly turned a little strict as he said:

"By no means should you have any despising thoughts. This Hubin although merely has a cultivation of the fifth layer, his character is extremely vicious and merciless. Originally, in Linqiu region, he was the chief of a hundred men in the army. Due to his crimes of rape, murder, and killing the citizens under the pretext of enemies, he was detained and awaited execution. But he escaped from the army and killed countless people along the way, before coming here." He briefly paused before continuing in a heavy voice:

"Although he'd only killed ordinary people, killing so many people has caused a natural baleful aura on his body. If you come across him, act with caution and don't be careless."

Everybody felt a chill in their hearts, before they all made sounds of agreement together.

He Wude had always been a swift and decisive person. He immediately moved on to allocation. He allowed each person present to take a few servants, all of whom were at the cultivation of the third layer, and a portrait of Hubin, before leaving to their respective positions.

He Yiming and the rest naturally had no objections, instead, they were actually quite thrilled.

After cultivating for many years, they finally obtained a chance to display their skills. They would naturally not miss such an opportunity.

After allocating the positions, He Wude waved his hand. Everybody, leading the servants under them, left with the envoys of Cheng family. Only leaving behind He Quanxin and He Wude.

After everybody left, He Quanxin hesitatingly said:

"Father, He Yiming has just turned thirteen this year. Furthermore, not even a year has passed since he attained the sixth layer. Allowing him to personally take charge of a section seems too early for him."

He Wude faintly laughed, before saying: "Quanxin, you remember which section I assigned to Yiming?"

He Quanxin was surprised. He thought for a bit, before he suddenly realized and said:

"I understand. Yiming is assigned to the section which is nearest to the county town. Furthermore, it's the main passage. Since Hubin has come here as a fugitive, he naturally would not take the main passage seeming like an honest person. He would tread desolate paths, and he would not go to the County town as well. That would just be walking right into a trap. Therefore, Yiming is going just for show."

He Wude faintly nodded and said:

"Correct. Yiming's talent is the best among his siblings. I have a lot of expectations from him. However, staying in the home and bitterly cultivating all the time is not necessarily a good thing. Thus, allowing him to experience such an atmosphere will certainly prove beneficial for his future. As for that Hubin, with three big clans joining hands and mobilizing personnel from every village, nothing unexpected will happen unless he has already left the county."

He Quanxin heavily nodded and said: "Father, you have put a lot of thought in this."

He Wude said with his face beaming:

"Apart from all this. I allowed to Yiming to lead a group so as to let Xu family and Cheng family know that He family yet again has a genius. I feel those two old foxes of Xu family and Cheng family should be clear on who is going to be the strongest family of Tai Cang county in the future."

Two days later, a servant, carrying two letters delivered by the Xu family that contained the latest information, arrived in front of the Old Master.

Since He Quanyi was outside the manor, He Quanxin had temporarily left the Book Pavilion's courtyard and was handling the trifling matters of the estate. When the information arrived, he was discussing some cultivation problems with the Old Master.

He took the letters and opened the seal of the first letter. His complexion slightly changed, and he said:

"Father. Xu family has sent a letter. Hubin's whereabouts has been discovered. However, he'd injured Xu family's third generation, Yude and Yucai, and has again escaped."

He Wude was slightly surprised. After muttering something to himself, he said:

"Xu Yude and Xu Yucai should have already advanced to the sixth layer."

"That's right. They also attained the sixth layer at the age of seventeen and eighteen like Yihai and Yixuan. What a pity, none of them have been able to attain the seventh layer till now, even though they are twenty-four and twenty-five."

As He Quanxin spoke these words, his voice had a complacent tone which he failed to conceal.

He Wude softly said:

"Two youngsters possessing the sixth layer Internal Energy couldn't stop a fifth layer fugitive..... This Hubin is not simple."

He Quanxin faintly nodded and opened the seal of the second letter. However, as soon as his eyes swept through the letter, his expression immediately transformed, and a cry escaped his mouth:

"Not good."

He Wude's brows creased, and he said:

"Quanxin, you are an elder in the family. You should possess an elder's attitude. Don't lose your head over some trivial matters."

He Quanxin, without hearing the words of his father, lifted his head and hurriedly said:

"Hubin as of now is escaping towards the county town's main passage. Xu family's second generation expert is closely pursuing him."

"En, Xu family's second generation's strength should be sufficient.....what, he is escaping towards the county town's main passage?" He Wude suddenly stood up. His face actually turned slightly green.

He Quanxin turned around without the slightest hesitation and said

"Father, I will not let anything happen to Yiming."

However, even before he finished talking, something flickered in front of

his eyes before he saw a figure flashing past him and rushing in county town's direction.

He Quanxin blankly stared, before smiling bitterly.

Despite being a mere fifth layer cultivator, Hubin was a fugitive who'd his hands covered in blood. He, who was capable of fleeing up to here from the distant Linqiu region and injuring two members of Xu family's younger generation who'd attained the sixth layer many years ago, was not something Yiming could handle.

If he'd come across the other members of the younger generation, He Quanxin would not have been so worried. He Yihai and He Yixuan were already over eighteen. They had participated many times in small competitions against Xu family and Cheng family. They had abundant battle experience. Moreover, about two years were about to pass since they had attained the sixth layer, furthermore, they each had the strength of a battle skill cultivated almost to the peak with them. Even if they lacked in terms of personal battle strength, they could have at least kept their lives intact.

However, He Yiming was different. Merely half a year had passed since his breakthrough to the sixth layer. Regarding the mastery of battle skills, reaching the peak was even more impossible for him. If in his current condition, he encountered an individual like Hubin who'd an experience of hundreds of battles and had crawled up from beneath the piles of dead bodies, it would not be pleasant to say who would emerge superior. If He Yiming suffered an injury as a result, that would be a gargantuan blow to the He family.

He Quanxin quietly sighed and immediately chased after He Wude.

However, his strength was far below his father's. He was absolutely unable to catch up to the latter. Hoping that He Yiming would not encounter Hubin, he regretfully sighed. His old man, even with his deep foresight and rigorous schemes, had eventually made a mistake this time.

Chapter 17 - Encounter In The Woods.

He Yiming had left the manor along with the five servants allocated to him, and at this moment, was headed towards the county town.

As he looked at the road, which could be considered a part of his allocation, he faintly guessed that this time's hunt basically had nothing to do with him.

Even an idiot would not be as brazen and audacious as to take such a passage. Not to mention an idiot could not even have made all the way up to here from the Linqiu region without falling into the net. Therefore, unless that Hubin's brain had fried due to the pressure, they would not be meeting each other.

Beside him, these five servants were the best selections among the servants nurtured in the He family estate.

Apart from the influential family, people cultivating Internal Energy were extremely few. The total servants in the He family estate and the robust men cultivating fields for the family amounted to several hundreds of people. He Wude did not look down on them and had imparted them with cultivation techniques. However, due to the difference in the circumstances and the supervision from the family, being able to attain the peak of the third layer was already an extraordinary feat.

All the five servants at the side of He Yiming had cultivated to the peak of the third layer. Furthermore, every single one of them was proficient in at least one martial skill.

In this respect, the servants were different from the directly-related disciples. A third generation disciple like He Yiming was not allowed to touch any sort of battle skill before attaining the sixth layer. On the other hand, servants would be bestowed with the simplest kind of battle skills after they attained the Internal Energy's third layer. On one hand, this would increase their battle strength by a quite a lot, on the other hand, they would not be able to have higher accomplishments in the Internal Energy cultivation.

This was the difference between directly related members and the servants. On the whole, all influential families opted to do so.

After walking behind Cheng family's people for half a day, they reached the predetermined location.

At this place was a relay station connected to the county town's main path. Staying here could be considered as beneficial for both sides. [1]

[tl: [1] = Tl: I have no idea, what this line implies.

Neji : Baka Translator = this means that the relay station is in the middle of the two path sides, so they have to pass by it to go in each direction. No other way is available.]

Since He Yiming was near the county town, he naturally wanted to meet his parents. However, after making inquiries, he found out that his mother and father were not in the town but had joined the hunt as well.

Feeling regret in his heart, he gave up on the idea of entering the city

and made inquiries about the information on Hubin from the Cheng family's people.

Three cultivation-related families resided in the Tai Cang district; He family, Xu family, and Cheng family.

He family and Xu family had a tenth layer Internal Energy expert watching over them. This was the absolute peak strength with respect to a desolate and insignificant county. Although the Cheng family did not have a tenth layer Internal Energy expert, their family was the most ancient clan in the Tai Cang county and had deep-rooted influence. In this respect, He family, a family established by a Foreigner like He Wude, couldn't compare to the Cheng family.

Even the current county town's city lord was from the Cheng family.

Though, if it had not been as such, He Wude wouldn't have given them so much face by dispatching all the younger generation who'd attained the sixth layer.

He Yiming, with his own understanding, came to realize why would Cheng family spare no efforts to catch or kill an insignificant fugitive.

Right after being sentenced to death for his heinous crimes, Hubin escaped while killing a high-ranking official in the process. Imperial Palace couldn't tolerate this by any means. At the same time, the family of that killed official also promised many benefits to Cheng family in private. This was the true cause for Cheng family's such a steadfast attitude on this matter.

After waiting for a day in the relay station, that initial feeling of excitement had long ago dissipated.

If he'd known this earlier, he might as well have slowly cultivated in the manor.

He was not the only person who understood that Hubin would not be coming here, even the five servants and the ordinary officials in the relay station, who just had a sprinkling knowledge of the matter, were extremely clear on this point. Thus, the atmosphere in the relay station was not tense at all.

Eventually, He Yiming couldn't endure anymore. He passed some instructions to the servants under him and left for the mountains behind.

The relay station was constructed on the public path, however, Tai Cang district was not just a stretch of plain lands. Behind the relay station was a mountain range. In his extreme boredom, He Yiming suddenly became curious and decided to enter the mountain range.

But he didn't know, about half an hour after he entered the mountains, an urgent message was delivered to the relay station. Hubin was escaping in this direction, following the mountain trails.

The servants and the officials at the relay station blankly looked at each other. Half of the man power promptly entered the mountains. However, what would they accomplish with this bit of people?

After entering the mountains, He Yiming was just like a fish that had entered a sea. He shuttled about in the mountain forest at a lightning fast speed.

He'd a fairly abundant experience regarding the woods in mountains. His family estate was situated at the foot of mountains. In terms of denseness, the woods at this place were far incomparable to the woods there.

He completed a circle but didn't come across any large animal that was worthy of him taking action. As for the rabbits, chickens, and other small animals, he didn't even glance at them.

He Yiming faintly shook his head. These woods were, after all, near a public path, and were far incomparable to the ancient woods deep inside the mountains behind His family estate.

Just as he intended to return, he suddenly heard an extremely faint yet strange sound.

He slightly paused and inclined his ear, before perceiving a possible wild beast running at a fast speed not too far away from him. What surprised He Yiming was that this wild beast was capable of producing an apprehensive feeling inside him.

With a chill in his heart, he immediately determined that this was definitely not a small beast. He felt surprised to discover such a beast in these woods. Applying strength through his feet, he sped off in that direction.

Despite its movements being quick, the wild beast was clearly not using its entire strength. Thus, He Yiming was easily able to catch up. However, as he approached that place with caution, he discovered that the running sounds of the beast had disappeared.

He Yiming turned increasingly cautious. He had dealt with wild beasts before, thus, he immediately realized that the beast must have heard his footsteps and had softened its movements as a result.

But He Yiming was brimming with self-confidence. Even when he was just at the sixth layer and had not cultivated a battle skill, he could defeat a ferocious beast such as fox bear. His strength had an immense increase since then, hence, he obviously wouldn't care about any ferocious beast.

If this had been ancient woods, some beasts might have been able to evoke fear in him. However, in such surroundings, he didn't believe any beast could be more ferocious than a fox bear.

In a few steps, he arrived at the trail of that ferocious beast. However, as his gaze swept around the vicinity of the trail, his heart suddenly raced.

He'd seen a footprint. Although the footprint was only behind on a patch of weeds and was extremely shallow, He Yiming had no doubt regarding the fact that this was not a footprint of a wild beast, but a human's.

After a momentary hesitation, He Yiming retreated a few steps and carefully surveyed his surroundings. Subsequently, his expression turned increasingly heavy.

After observing the traces nearby, He Yiming was absolutely certain that this was not just a human, but a human cultivator that possessed a formidable Internal Energy. The cultivator had a certain understanding about these woods. The signs he'd left during the entire way were extremely few. Though this cultivator seemed to have become quite frightened after sensing him, otherwise, even these few traces might not have been left.

Circulating a big amount of Internal Energy in his body, He Yiming raised his head and looked forward. Indescribably, the danger he was feeling kept intensifying.

Although no sound came from ahead, but he had a feeling that danger was getting increasingly closer to him.

Although such a feeling was somewhat strange, He Yiming was certain that he was not wrong.

With his spirits suddenly roused, He Yiming sucked in a breath of mountain woods' ice cold air. He'd never clashed with anyone except his siblings.

Some of it had to do with his age, but the much bigger reason was, not much people in this county would dare to fight with a young master of He family.

But today, he could be certain that the opponent would not care about his identity as He family's sixth young master.

Suddenly the feeling of danger in He Yiming's heart increased by a million times. Without thinking, he dived to the side without caring about his status, before rolling on the ground and consequently arriving behind a big tree, and springing back to his feet immediately afterwards.

He'd heard an air-piercing sound next to his ear just now, while at his original position was a crossbow arrow. .

After seeing this arrow, He Yiming's suddenly felt a faint chill in his heart. Even his arms and legs felt cold.

He didn't expect, the opponent would directly go for kill even before exchanging a single word. If he'd been struck by the arrow, his conclusion definitely wouldn't have been anything good.

A crossbow was not something an ordinary person could use. It was a standardized equipment in the army. But, a tyrannical family usually possessed such self-defense weapons. Naturally, He family was not an exception. Thus, He Yiming was pretty familiar with a crossbow arrow. Therefore, he was able to recognize this lethal weapon at a glance.

His heartbeat suddenly quickened by a huge amount. His movements just now were purely a subconscious reaction. If he'd been a single step slow, he would have already suffered a serious injury.

He raised his head and looked in the direction where crossbow came from with an intense fury burning in his heart. His body slightly bent down and leaped forward like a cheetah.

Chapter 18 - First Kill

He Yiming's speed was extremely quick. Although he was not moving in a straight line, the genuine reason he charged forward despite the danger was a kind of awareness.

It was a special feeling, an indescribable sixth sense, telling him that if he were to advance at this moment, he would not face too much danger.

After he made two up and downs, towards his lateral side, by a big tree not too far away, he saw a man in black skin-tight clothes out of the corner of his eyes. The man had a small crossbow in his hand and was currently loading it with an arrow.

He Yiming glanced at his hands and immediately discerned that such a crossbow was a bit different than the standardized ones provided in the army. Be it in terms of might or size, this crossbow was a lot smaller than the latter. If he had not made a mistake, this crossbow must have been forged by an influential family in secret. This man being able to get his hands onto it was pretty surprising.

He Yiming slightly bent his body and swept his hand on the ground, before he picked up a big stone and threw it towards his opponent.

Although He Yiming had not learned any hidden weapon techniques, infusing the stone with his Internal Energy nevertheless produced the same air-piercing sound as it flew towards his opponent like an arrow.

His opponent's speed was quick as he reacted swiftly. He instantly discarded the arrow he was loading and dodged the stone with a lazy roll. As soon as he stood, he applied strength through his feet, causing a huge mixture of tiny rocks and mud, like torrents of rain covering the whole sky, to emerge in the way He Yiming was charging.

He Yiming was gloomy in his heart. He didn't anticipate that he would have to face such a thing when he wished to exchange blows with his opponent. He Yiming's figure remained in mid-air for a brief instant, but he couldn't avoid some of the mud splashing on his body.

His both legs touched the ground before he eventually saw his the opponent's face.

His opponent was a middle-aged man with a sharp-pointed mouth and monkey cheeks. In particular, his eyes had a trace of sinister, red color seeming like blood.

He Yiming's heart tensed. He immediately recognized the opponent and also understood why would the latter mount a sneak attack without exchanging a word.

'Hubin?' He subconsciously tightened his fists and tensely said inwardly.

He felt an indescribable chill in his heart. He was at the seventh layer of the Internal Energy, but his opponent had killed an enormous amount of people. If he were to say that he didn't feel the slightest fear, that would just be lying to himself.

Hubin coldly watched He Yiming, the corner of his mouth slightly curling into a sneer.

"You children of big families, your guts are truly getting more and more. Even such a small guy has dared to come and throw his life away."

He Yiming sucked in a deep breath and circulated his Internal Energy, attaining the peak of the Primordial Energy's sixth layer within an instant.

He casually extended his hands and said in a clear voice:

"Hubin, who has come to throw away his life, we will only know after the fight. You..." His face suddenly tensed and both fists simultaneously stretched forward. Because Hubin, who was in front of his eyes, had already pounced on him before he could finish speaking.

Previously, in the manor, during the duels with his siblings, both sides would first properly prepare themselves before displaying their moves. Hubin's sudden attack halfway during his words was completely out of his expectations.

Hubin's figure, seeming as smooth as a swimming fish, covered the distance in a single leap. His palm, seeming like a light feather and devoid of strength, effortlessly slapped towards He Yiming's side.

He Yiming was naturally not willing to be outdone. He fully employed his gold-type cultivation technique, Primordial Energy, in correspondence with Rolling Boulder Fist, and struck towards his opponent without the slightest hesitation.

As soon as the two fists collided, Hubin's complexion immediately changed. Exerting his feet, he hurriedly retreated like a ghost. His body circled around in mid-air, before he stepped on two big trees in succession and finally neutralized the strong thrust from He Yiming's fist.

After the formal exchange between the two sides, He Yiming's heart immediately calmed down.

Although Hubin had a murderous aura around his body which he feared, former's Internal Energy was indeed only at the fifth layer. Even if he used battle skills corresponding to the Internal Energy's sixth layer, he could easily beat his opponent. As soon as he thought up to here, he quickly strode forward with a light shout.

Hubin's feet touched the ground, and he suddenly shouted:

"Wait."

He Yiming's footsteps stopped. His figure, like a statue, stood completely still as he suspiciously stared his opponent.

Hubin's both hands were on his back and face seemed a bit frightened as he said:

"Sixth layer Internal Energy and sixth layer battle skill? Which family's child are you?"

He Yiming, with his head high and chest out, loftily said:

"Tai Cang's He family."

"Good. What a surprise, He family actually has such a young expert." Hubin nodded, but his eyes were filled with killing intent. He stretched out his hands and rubbed them once, before saying:

"My qi and blood have completely settled down. We can continue."

He Yiming blankly stared for a brief instant, before suddenly realizing that his previous strike had already sent his opponent's qi and blood into chaos. If he'd followed up with another attack, he would have certainly gained a huge advantage. However, because of this exchange of words, latter had already recovered himself.

His face was slightly red. This time's lesson could be regarded as extremely profound for him. Henceforth, he would firmly keep it in mind at all times.

A trace of anger flickered in He Yiming's eyes. His two fists alternately struck towards Hubin in an endless succession. With sixth layer Internal Energy operating in his body, his every fist was followed by a wind current. The even more frightening thing was that before the wind current of one fist dissipated, next one would have already been issued. These wind currents surrounded his body and formed a defensive shield. Furthermore, his own body seemed like a giant circular boulder which was incessantly rolling in a certain range. Due to the wind currents, even the gargantuan trees, which were in range, were faintly swaying. Not to mention, some shrubs and grasses, that only left behind profound traces

as if they had been steamrolled by a huge boulder.

At the same time, his vehemence continuously increased alongside the wind currents. After several tens of fists, the apprehension in his heart finally dissipated. His every fist felt refreshed, and he gradually gained an absolute supremacy.

He was feeling completely unrestrained. It was vastly different from what he usually felt while dueling with his siblings.

This was a real battle, a true battle...

As for his enemy, He Yiming rather admired him. The Internal Energy and the battle skill he'd employed was clearly a gold type technique. However, his body didn't have the firmness and sharpness of a metal type battle skill, but had the hard-and-soft nature of a water type battle skill. Capable of using a metal type battle skill up to such an extent, He Yiming was absolutely unable to see the head or tail of his opponent's battle experience.

An ordinary cultivator with metal type Internal Energy's fifth layer would have found it extremely difficult to hold against such a relentless assault from He Yiming. Hubin's skill was indeed extraordinary. His figure was shuttling about like a swimming fish in that seemingly giant boulder of wind currents.

Going by his fifth layer metal type Internal Energy, if he could avoid a direct strike from He Yiming's fists, the encompassing winds were although ferocious, they had no chance of injuring him. Though, to dodge these seemingly everywhere fists, he couldn't attack at all.

After fifteen minutes, Hubin was quite anxious. He was continuously cursing inwardly.

‘Where the hell did this freak pop up from?’

‘After employing metal-type Internal Energy for so long, how are wind currents still intensifying.’

During the previous confrontation, he found out that He Yiming’s battle skill was the metal type Rolling Boulder Fist. This was a pretty good fist technique; one of the strongest in all the techniques of the same rank. However, such a fist technique had a huge disadvantage. It consumed huge amounts of Internal Energy in order to maintain a continuous aggression.

He could tell at a glance that the youngster in front of his eyes had not exceeded the age of fifteen. Capable of attaining the sixth layer at this age was an extraordinary feat. Even in the entire Tianluo country, people who’d attained the sixth layer before the age of fifteen were extremely rare.

Therefore, he decided that he would try his greatest against He Yiming. As long as he waited until the opponent had exhausted his Internal Energy, he could commence his counterattack.

However, to this moment, He Yiming was becoming increasingly fierce with the fight’s progression. He could also feel a kind of continuously intensifying oppression from the wind currents. By the looks of it, his opponent’s Internal Energy might continue to operate endlessly.

‘Don’t tell me this guy’s Internal Energy has already attained the sixth layer’s peak? If not, how could he put on such a frightening display?’

Hubin was extremely regretful. If he’d known that the things would turn out as such, he would have thought about a plan to flee at the very beginning. However, being surrounded by the wind currents, escaping was much harder for him at this moment. Furthermore, continuously evading He Yiming’s wind was in itself a very dangerous approach. He faintly felt that he might not be able to stand his ground.

At the same time, there were strong soldiers chasing behind his back. In such conditions, if he continued to tangle with this youngster, even if he could successfully dodge latter’s assault, as long as his pursuers caught up to him, he would not be able to escape even if he had wings.

A trace of hesitation flickered in his eyes. He gnashed his teeth, dodged He Yiming’s next strike, before his feet landed on the ground and entered the soil like a rock stump.

He raised both of his hands high and roared. His both palms, seeming a little swelled, struck towards He Yiming with the pressure of Mt. Tai weighing down.

He Yiming was overjoyed. Although he had the upper hand all along, his opponent was extremely experienced and had not confronted him directly. This made him gloomy as if he’d been striking cotton with all of his strength. Therefore, when Hubin stood steadily and counterattacked, he felt his dearest wish coming true.

The instant fists and palms resolutely struck against each other, He Yiming's complexion immediately transformed and his powerful Internal Energy surged backward. The opponent's two palms, as if a gigantic axe cutting a mountain, thoroughly split apart the formidable might accumulated off his Rolling Boulder Fist and counterattacked.

Chapter 19 - Dead Man's Rewards

The formidable strength instantly penetrated through He Yiming's every defense and slashed at him like a sharp blade.

At this instant, He Yiming's awareness rose to the extreme. He actually felt as if he was brushing against the death. He felt so unbelievably close to that obscure, murky, and frightening aura.

His opponent's palms could transmit such a formidable strength; such a thing was absolutely beyond He Yiming's understanding of Internal Energy and battle skills.

At this instant, He Yiming's body suddenly stirred on its own.

Suddenly both of his fists opened up and huge amounts of Internal Energy began to flow in reverse. Unexpectedly, at this moment of life and death, his metal type Internal Energy, which could penetrate any stronghold, switched to the water type Internal energy, which was endless, soft, yet hard.

Likewise, water-type Internal Energy rushed into his palms, and the incomparably strong Rolling Boulder Fist instantly transformed into soft and gentle Silk Palm.

The positions of offense and defense reversed in a split second. However, the difficulty of reversal was much higher for He Yiming.

Despite being on the defense from the beginning, the technique used by Hubin was, in fact, a certain metal-type technique. However, with his abundant experience, even when he used a metal type technique, it seemed soft, gentle, and devoid of strength.

However, after steeling his mind to clash head-on, he was able to instantly switch to the most powerful battle skill of the same type.

However, He Yiming was different. He'd already employed the metal-type battle skill Rolling Boulder Fist to the sixth layer's peak. The difficulty he'd to face while switching both metal type Internal Energy and metal type battle skill to water type Internal Energy and water type battle skill absolutely couldn't be compared to the difficulty faced by Hubin while switching battle skills of the same type.

However, not only He Yiming accomplished it, he accomplished it in an extremely smooth manner, just as a canal forms wherever water flows.

Hubin's heart sank. When he'd decided to put everything on his ultimate move, he'd done it with the intention of getting an outcome where both sides would suffer injuries. The strength of his battle skill was matchless, and he was certain of success. As long as he could seriously injure the youngster in front of him, with his abundant battle experience, he could definitely take care of the former within a short duration.

However, regardless of whatever his backup plan was, he never expected the outcome. His opponent was clearly using the number one metal type battle skill in terms of assault, however, the instant latter's fists turned into open palms, his battle skill also turned into water type Silm

Palm. Furthermore, the Internal Energy behind the Silk Palm was even more out of his expectations.....

He Yiming's figure retreated like an ape and neutralized that strong impulse in just a few steps. Suddenly, an intense flush emerged on his face; a deep crimson color which corresponded to someone intoxicated with wine. At the same time, an unprecedented powerful aura erupted out of his body. At this moment, the youngster, as if an incarnation of a demon god from the nine hells, raised both of his fists high, and again surged forward while his entire body emitted a kind of unstoppable vehement aura.

Within an instant, the might of the metal-type Primordial Energy's seventh layer and the might of the metal-type Rolling Boulder Fist combined together and exhibited the might of the metal type techniques to the maximum possible extreme.

This also was the strongest move He Yiming had issued to this date. It was far stronger than any of the moves he'd issued while consciously training in his room.

At such a crucial life-or-death moment in the fight, his body's potential was completely aroused, and it perfectly exhibited this move to the finest detail. His entire being, as if a canonball yet also like a gigantic mountain peak, rushed towards his opponent.

Hubin immediately had an immense change in his complexion. While confronting such a strong imposing manner, Hubin had a feeling as if he would neither be able to dodge nor avoid. He felt as if some power had confined his body's surroundings. Furthermore, he also felt that even if he could escape to the world's end, he would still be chased down.

This person was, after all, an individual who'd killed countless people. Such circumstances, on the contrary, aroused the vicious nature that was concealed inside his body. He suddenly roared and once again raised his hands high up in the air. His originally swelled hands seemed even bigger.

Bang!

As if the collision of two gigantic iron plates, at the time of the collision of both side's palms, a sound echoed which seemed as if a rock and metal had struck against each other. It seemed as if the palms of these two individuals were not actually made of flesh, rather had become a steel-like existence.

The two forces exploded at the point of the collision, and He Yiming's figure was blasted away upside down. Surprisingly, his strike, which was brimming with power, couldn't completely suppress the opponent in terms of strength.

The powerful force issued by Hubin's palm had stepped beyond He Yiming's understanding. The might produced by a battle skill which corresponded to the peak of the fifth layer could actually cause him and his body suffer so much.

However, while being in air, He Yiming again changed his Internal Energy from metal-type to water-type. The strong self-healing capabilities of water type Internal Energy could be seen at this moment. The strong impact he'd received and his slightly suffering five viscera and six bowels immediately improved a lot.

He stretched out his legs and severely stepped on a tree, before managing to fall down. He staggered for a short while and eventually steadied himself.

Raising his vision, he saw that Hubin's complexion had turned a faint shade of grey like that of death. Latter's face shuddered for a long time, before his legs went soft and he slumped on the ground:

"Seventh layer.....seventh layer...."

He Yiming took a deep breath:

"That's right. Seventh layer Primordial Energy and seventh layer Rolling Boulder Fist."

Hubin's face turned increasingly ugly as he forced a bitter laugh:

"Seventh layer, you have actually trained to the seventh layer. The reputation of influential family's children is indeed well-deserved." His tone was getting increasingly low, and his body was on the verge of collapse. The bitterness in his eyes had turned into despair. He opened his mouth as if wishing to say something, but no words came out in the end. His eyes turned dim and his body collapsed, before it loudly fell on the ground.

After a bit of hesitation, He Yiming advanced a few steps. He'd already tasted this man's cunningness many times, he would obviously not be fooled again. He picked up a stone and resolutely threw at Hubin's face.

He'd not used his full strength this time, but the moment it struck Hubin's right eye, the eye immediately exploded and exposed a black hole along with blood splashing in every direction.

Hubin still didn't budge as if he hadn't felt it all.

He Yiming's mouth slightly twitched as he resisted the nausea. He advanced forward and checked, before making certain that Hubin had truly died.

Once he'd made certain that Hubin had died, he could no longer repress his negative emotions. He retreated a few steps, arrived beneath a big tree, and suddenly emptied out the insides of his stomach, which seemed like flooding rivers and rummaging oceans.

Not only he emptied out everything he'd eaten, even his digestive fluids were thoroughly emptied out until his intestines and stomach slowly calmed down.

As He Yiming turned his head and looked at the corpse, he felt his blood going cold.

When he was confronting a living person, although he was somewhat afraid, once he exchanged blows, all of his apprehensions immediately dissipated away. However, his legs slightly shivered after the person died at his hands.

After hesitating for a long time, he eventually went forward and arrived beside the corpse. He cautiously reached out with his hand and began to

search the body.

He didn't know why would he suddenly thought about such a thing, but once his thoughts turned in this direction, he couldn't stop his body from complying.

After a short while, He Yiming had taken out some things. Included among these were two gold coins and ten taels of loose silver. This was excellent stuff. Although one might have some misgivings about making riches off killing people, He Yiming had no hesitation submitting to greed.

Although He family was one of the top families in the Tai Cang county, He Yiming was, after all, only thirteen years old. His monthly allowance was merely three taels of loose silver. If he exchanged these two gold coins to silver, he would obtain at least two hundred taels, which would be the combined sum of his five-six years of allowance.

As he was collecting these things, he was suddenly astonished as he pulled out a thin book.

He didn't know what type of material was used to make this book. It actually gave off a jade like feeling in his hands. He was absolutely certain that this was not ordinary paper.

He gently opened the book, and his eyes suddenly shined.

Surprisingly, just this book's first page was illustrating a posture, and He Yiming had an extremely profound impression of this posture.

This was the exact posture which had allowed Hubin to exhibit an inconceivable might just a moment ago.

He Yiming's heart instantly jumped. He flipped to the title page. At the top of the page were clear words:

Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms.

He Yiming's thoughts were immediately flooded with ecstasy. He was far more ecstatic compared to when he'd found two gold coins.

Hubin was only a fifth layer cultivator. However, upon using this skill, the might he exhibited was actually far above the might of another battle skill corresponding to the sixth layer's peak. If it had been him instead, how strong would it be?

The difficulty he'd been feeling in presence of the corpse immediately disappeared. For a moment, He Yiming's emotions surged, and he almost felt like loudly shouting.

However, at this moment, his vision tensed and both ears faintly moved. His complexion slightly changed as he stored the frightening battle skill in his bosom and filled Hubin's pockets with the remaining stuff.

Chapter 20 - Xu Family Fortress

He Yiming heard sounds of disturbance coming from afar. He immediately discerned that this disturbance was produced by a group of people.

A glance at a corpse on the ground, and One could tell that these people had come here following Hubin's trails.

He Yiming again retreated a few steps and hesitated a bit, before loudly speaking:

"Who is it? State your names."

The sounds disappeared in a flash. Upon hearing He Yiming's voice, those people immediately ceased to advance.

A loud and clear voice sounded:

"We are from Xu family, coordinating with the officials to arrest a major criminal. Your majesty is..."

He Yiming's age was still small and he'd not begun to handle to manage the affairs of He family yet, but he at least knew that Xu family was one of the three influential families in Tai Cang county alongside He family. Xu family also had a tenth level Internal Energy master, and their relations with He family were not harmonious at all.

However, under such circumstances, He Yiming had no desire to look for trouble. He said in a clear voice:

"Have respected members of Xu family been chasing the fugitive Hubin?"

"That's right."

"All right. In that case, you might want to return."

A few faint noises sounded from that direction. He Yiming's both ears slightly shook. He'd discovered that these sounds were that of bows tightening.

He coldly laughed inwardly. The might of crossbows was indeed formidable. Despite having attained the seventh layer, he didn't dare take an arrow head-on with his bare body. Though from the perspectives of cultivators who'd attained the sixth layer, only a sneak attack or a large-scale attack would be truly effective.

If they alerted He Yiming, while they themselves only shot ten or so arrows at a time, it would basically pose no threat to He Yiming.

After quite a while, the voice once again sounded. But, this time, it carried a faint killing intent:

"Who is your majesty? ...an accomplice of Hubin?"

He Yiming rolled his eyes and said:

"You are his accomplice."

"Since your majesty is not Hubin's accomplice, why would you shield him?"

He Yiming was about to speak when he suddenly heard faint sounds coming from the sides. He immediately understood that while this man was conversing with him, he'd already assigned his companions to surround him from both sides.

He Yiming's heart sank and brows slightly creased. Being so decisive, this individual was definitely not a kind person. If his Internal Energy had not attained the realm of the seventh layer, he actually might have failed to catch onto these sounds.

Of course, this was related to his lack of experience. If it had been Hubin, he definitely would not have missed these faint noises despite only being at the fifth layer.

He Yiming coldly snorted and said:

"Everyone, no need to conceal yourself. Just come out without tricks, Hubin is dead already."

The sounds from all the three sides died. Being discovered, they would

naturally not try to pretend anymore. Furthermore, upon hearing the news of Hubin's death, they obviously wanted to come out and have a look.

After a short while, more than ten people stepped out from the three directions. Apart from the three people wearing the attire of the lower-officials, all the rest were dressed in the same type of robe which was the official clothing of the Xu Family Fortress.

The individual in the lead was a tall man. He didn't have any beard, just a short mustache on his mouth. He seemed to be in high spirits, and his eyes seemed resonant in such a way that it caused people not being able to intently look at him. Clearly, he was a cultivator who'd high accomplishments in Internal Energy.

He Yiming's swept his gaze through everybody at a lightning fast speed. He immediately discerned that except for the man, all the rest were somewhere around the third layer and were hardly any different than the elite servants of the He Family Manor. However, the man in the lead was rather different. He Yiming was unable to discern his true strength, but he'd a feeling that the man's strength would be much above him and would be hardly any different than his father and the rest.

After stepping out, the man's gaze first swept through He Yiming's face. He immediately revealed a faintly surprised expression. Subsequently, as he saw the Hubin's body on the ground, his brows slightly creased.

He waved his hand. The three lower-officials immediately came forward, took out a picture, and compared it to the body on the ground.

Despite Hubin's eyeball being destroyed, his facial features were not affected at all. After a brief moment, the three lower-officials simultaneously shouted in excited voices:

"It's Hubin. Senior Xu-second, it's really him."

He Yiming instantly guessed the man's identity. He ought to be the ranked second in Xu family's second generation, named Xu Xiangci.

He Yiming had heard some things about Xu family. They also had a lord father comparable to He Wude. With the two tenth level masters, both the sides maintained an equilibrium in terms of their martial strength's peak.

Xu family's second generation had four members, though none of these had attained the ninth level. All of them were strong individuals at the eighth level. In Tai Cang county, a small region, such strength couldn't be belittled.

As expected, the man's vision was once again fixed on He Yiming, and his eyes seemed slightly suspicious.

With his experience, he could discern that this youngster's age was not much. It didn't seem possible for him to be above fifteen, but still, he could kill Hubin. The man naturally found such a thing inconceivable.

Despite being just a fifth layer cultivator, the strength Hubin displayed during the chase was far above the bounds of a fifth layer cultivator's strength. Xu family's third generation was the first to clash with him.

However, two members of the younger generation who had attained the sixth layer were unable to stop him and instead had to flee due to being injured by him.

This was the true reason Xu family's second generation personally joined the chase. Upon seeing He Yiming's appearance, the man inevitably found it difficult to convince himself.

He faintly cupped his hands and said in a clear voice:

"My humble self is Xu Xiangci from Xu family. May I ask, younger brother is...."

Although the two families fought among each other, it had not yet attained the point of shredding apart all pretenses of cordiality. Therefore, He Yiming had to be courteous on the surface. He slightly bent his waist and said:

"Small nephew, He Yiming, greets Senior Xu-second."

"He Yiming? You are from He family..."

"Yes." He Yiming said in a neither servile nor overbearing voice.

A malicious glint flickered in Xu Xianci's eyes and he coldly asked:

"Hubin is truly killed by you?"

He Yiming's brows slightly creased, and he replied with his head high:

"Correct. This man has truly died at small nephew's hands."

Xu Xianci's lips slightly stretched at the corners, and the numerous people behind him turned slightly tensed. Even the three lower-officials knew that in Tai Cang county, Xu family and He family did not get along too well. Although they seemed to be at peace on the surface, be it matters related to territory or business, the friction between them was not trivial.

A senior of Xu family's second generation had personally led people, but the fugitive had died at the hands of He family's third generation. This was indeed a loss of face.

After a bit of hesitation, Xu Xiangci suddenly laughed once and said:

"Good, a hero from young age [1]. Has nephew already attained the realm of Internal Energy's sixth layer?"

[tl: [1] = 英雄出少年 an ancient saying that heroes begin to show their excellence from a young age.]

"Barely sixth layer." He Yiming tactfully said. Even his own family didn't know his true strength, thus, it was even more impossible for him to tell an outsider.

Xu Xiangci's face was becoming increasingly harmonious. He said:

"Sixth layer of Internal Energy is indeed pretty good. May I know nephew's age?"

"Small nephew is thirteen this year."

Sounds of sharp breath intakes sounded from the surroundings. They looked at He Yiming with peculiar gazes.

A hard-to-conceal peculiar glint flickered in Xu Xiangci's eyes while his heart began to churn. A faint killing intent flickered in his eyes. However, his reaction was extremely quick. He instantly restrained the killing intent. The killing intent instantly appeared and disappeared. An average person would not have felt it.

However, the individual in front of him, He Yiming, felt it extremely clearly. His heart immediately raced, and he enormously increased his guard against the man in front of him.

His fight with Hubin had allowed him to understand some truths.

Some things are extremely difficult to learn through mere words. However, a life-and-death battle can allow one to mature extremely quickly.

For He Yiming, his battle with Hubin was extremely crucial. It allowed his entire being to have a transformation as if he'd been born anew.

In response to the killing intent revealed by his counterpart, countless thoughts immediately emerged in his mind.

He faintly smiled and said:

"Senior Xu second, since Hubin is already executed, we should leave the mountains and let Cheng family take care of this matter."

Xu Xiangci faintly nodded and said:

"That's true. It should be this way." He turned his body and instructed:

"Take the corpse, we are leaving."

Following the mountain path, everybody was walking towards the outside. From the beginning, He Yiming had been walking at the end, maintaining a certain distance from Xu Xiangci.

The more they approached the end of mountains, the more Xu Xiangci's heart surged. Every once in a while, his vision swept through the three lower-officials and the servants of Xu family.

He Yiming looked calm and collected on the surface, but he'd increased his guard and was paying attention to every small movement of his counterpart with his eyes, while his mind was bitterly complaining. If the man decided to risk killing everyone to silence them in order to kill He Yiming, latter would have no chance to escape.

After all, Xu Xiangci was an eighth level Internal Energy expert. Furthermore, his battle experience was abundant and was far above that of He Yiming.

As He Yiming's thoughts were going rampant, he thought of countless ideas. Though, it seemed none of these held any use for his present situation.

Soon, in about fifteen minutes, they would exit the mountain pass. Xu Xiangci suddenly stopped his footsteps and sucked in a deep breath. His eyes turned resolute as if he'd made a decision.

At the same time, He Yiming's heart sank. He circulated his Internal Energy and was prepared to strike as if his life depended on it.

However, at this moment, sudden noises could be heard coming from the mountain pass. Both, Xu Xiangci and He Yiming, almost simultaneously an old man's figure.

Xu Xiangci's figure trembled and the killing intent in his heart immediately vanished, while He Yiming let out a long sigh. He knew that he was absolutely safe.

Chapter 21 - Smooth Return.

He Yiming dashed ahead like a bird. As he went past Xu Xiangci, his movements faintly slowed down a little for a moment. He didn't slow down again after that. The Senior Xu-second of the Xu Family Castle also had no intention to take any action.

After a few ups and downs, He Yiming arrived at the mountain forest's entrance.

Seven males could be seen here. In the lead was He family's lord father He Wude, and the few individuals behind were, in fact, the manor's servants who were staying in the relay station for the time being.

He Wude's brows were slightly creased and eyes had a slightly concerned expression. As he saw He Yiming coming towards him seeming full of life and vigor, his dense eyebrows immediately smoothened and the concern in his eyes also completely disappeared.

"Grandfather, why have you come?" He Yiming frankly asked the question which was in his mind. Of course, he was extremely glad in his heart. Fortunately, his grandfather had arrived early and timely, otherwise who knows what would have happened.

He Wude had aged, but his stature was tall; being one head taller than an average person. He waved his big hand, which seemed like a leaf fan, and said:

"This old man suddenly felt like going outside and roam a little. So, this

old man came here to see you.”

He Yiming was slightly stumped. As he looked at the dust on his grandfather and thought about Hubin, he immediately understood. His grandfather must have heard the message about Hubin being headed here, and thus, his grandfather had rushed over with all of his might. Otherwise, he definitely wouldn't look like such a sorry figure.

Instantly, a warm feeling welled up in his heart. He faintly lowered his head and softly said:

“I've troubled grandfather.”

With a gentle and kind smile on his face, He Wude reached out with his hand and lightly patted his shoulders. Subsequently, as his vision fell on Xu Xiangci, he indifferently said:

“Xu-second, why are you here?”

Xu Xiangci faintly bowed at once as a courtesy and earnestly said:

“Lord Father He, we came here chasing the fugitive and met small nephew He Yiming.”

Despite being a pillar of the strength of He family's second generation, he was not presumptuous in the slightest in front of He Wude. Of course, He family's second generation would also not dare to be neglectful in the presence of Xu family's Lord Father.

A cultivator possessing the tenth level of Internal Energy could cause anyone to feel admiration from the bottom of one's heart.

He Wude glanced at the corpse carried by the three lower-officials, before he suddenly asked:

"This is Hubin?"

"Yes, this traitor has already been executed." Xu Xiangci honestly and sincerely said. As for the lower-officials and the rest, they stood respectfully. Their strength was too low, and even the lower officials, who could be considered as a part of the authorities, didn't dare open their mouths in an on-going conversation between He Wude and Xu Xiangci.

He Wude faintly nodded his head and said:

"Xu-second, your luck is good. What was this traitor's skill?"

Xu Xiangci's face turned slightly red as he promptly said:

"Lord father He, I haven't exchanged blows with this traitor at all."

He Wude blankly stared, before he swept his gaze through the individuals who'd come with Xu Xiangci.

'This guy...they don't have a single expert who has the fifth layer of Internal Energy.'

Furthermore, they couldn't be compared to a man like Hubin who'd experienced battlefield and had crawled up from beneath piles of dead bodies. They might be assigned some odd jobs, but striking down a man like Hubin who'd such a vicious reputation? He didn't believe such a thing was possible.

With a constricted gaze, he said:

"Since it's not you, let this old man see the face of the person who did it."

Xu Xiangci's face was becoming increasingly red. At this moment, his hate for Hubin truly seeped into his bones. This traitor first encountered the elites of Xu family's third generation. However, the result was completely out of everybody's expectations. At two separate ambush points, he injured two of the most outstanding disciples of Xu family's third generation. This caused Xu Xiangci to pursue him disregarding everything, wishing to chase or kill this traitor.

However, he hadn't expected that even though he'd eventually caught up to Hubin, the latter had already turned into a corpse. The much important thing was the individual who killed him was not from the Xu family, on the contrary, he was from the He family; the family they constantly struggled against in secret.

When he saw that the individual was only thirteen years old, his heart was overwhelmed with emotions. He family already had He Quanxin and He Yitian; father and son, the genius duo. Could it be... another genius has emerged yet again? After ten years or so, on what basis would Xu

family contend against the He family?

This instant, when faced with He Wude's question, he couldn't open his mouth despite being quite thick-skinned.

He Wude's brows slightly creased as he said:

"Xu-second....don't tell me this old man's reputation is not enough? You actually don't....ah...Yiming what are you doing?"

Upon seeing Xu Xiangci had his lowered in silence, He Wude was dissatisfied and was about to rebuke him a little, when he suddenly felt someone faintly tugging at his clothes. He turned and saw He Yiming softly pulling at his clothes with an embarrassed face.

He Yiming licked his somewhat dry lips, before lightly speaking:

"Grandfather, it's me."

"What you?" He Wude stared blankly, before both of his ears suddenly perked up, and his eyes gleamed as his vision alternated from his grandson to the already dead Hubin. Eventually, he made the connection.

"Yiming, this traitor was killed by you?"

"Yes." He Yiming resolutely said.

He Wude's mouth was opened, and his mind was full of disbelief. He hesitated for a moment, before turning his head and asking:

"I heard this traitor injured your family's Yude and Yucai, how can this be?"

Xu Xiangci's face turned dark. What could he say? He Wude had unscrewed a pot that cannot boil. [1]

[tl: [1] = A sore point that shouldn't have been touched.]

If it had been another person in place of He Wude, Xu Xiangci would have immediately turned hostile. However in presence of Tai Cang county's peak cultivator, he forced out a smiling expression as he said:

"Lord father, only because this traitor injured Yude and Yucai, the second generation had madly pursued him. But we didn't expect this traitor would run into nephew Yiming, which turned out to be the path of his doom."

He Wude was eventually convinced. His eyes, which were on He Yiming, gleamed with several colours. He'd hurriedly rushed here only because he feared that He Yiming would run into that fiend. But he didn't expect that after fleeing here, the latter would instead die at He Yiming's hands. This bizarre transformation came as a huge surprise to him, but at the same time, it immensely comforted his old heart as well.

Though as he saw that forced smile on Xu Xiangci's face, his thoughts immediately cleared. He lightly coughed and said:

"Since this traitor has already been executed, quickly report to the Cheng Citywatch, and also let everyone break up."

Xu Xiangci promptly sounded his agreement. He was just about to leave with the numerous servants under him and the three lower-officials, but he somehow forgot to mention the matter of the corpse. It seemed as if he was going to take the corpse with him just like that.

He Wude suddenly made a stopping gesture with his hand as he said:

"Hold up, let me confirm." He Wude arrived beside the corpse in large strides. He glanced at Hubin's lifeless face for a moment and gently patted his body a few times.

Not too far away, He Yiming caught a strange expression on the face of Xu Xiangci. It contained regret, anger, anxiety, hope, expectations, and many other things. Even He Yiming couldn't exactly discern.

Furthermore, he also saw that He Wude's pats were extremely refined. He'd covered all the main concealing positions in just a few pats. With He Wude's experience combined with his cultivation of Internal Energy, which had almost reached the perfection, it took him just a few probes to be familiar with all the stuff on Hubin's body like the back of his hand.

Soon after, He Wude took out some stuff in bits and pieces. The thing that caused He Yiming to blush with shame was that these things still contained a gold coin and some loose silver.

Where on earth were these? He'd not found them back then. It seemed like his experience in making riches off dead people was a bit too low.

Upon looking at these things, He Wude and Xu Xiangci both revealed faint expressions of disappointment. The gold coin, of which everybody was sneaking glances, they chose to turn a blind eye.

He Wude muttered something under his breath, before he waved his hand and said:

"Xu-second you report back to the Cheng Citywatch, and we will return to the manor first."

Xu Xiangci agreed without the slightest hesitation and waited for He Wude to leave along with the rest. Following which, he rummaged through the corpse just in case. He disappointedly gave up after a few moments, upon not finding anything that could garner his attention.

With a wave of hand, he threw the gold coin into the hands of a lower-official and said:

"Take this corpse and the stuff, and deliver it to the Cheng family. You can divide the money. But today's matter mustn't be disclosed, clear?"

"Yes." The servants and lower-officials bowed and sounded their agreements, while their eyes, which were brimming with greed, stared at the gold coin.

His head turned in the direction in which He Wude and the rest had just

left, with a strange expression in his eyes. In the end, he remained unclear on how could He Yiming kill Hubin, who'd injured two cultivators of the sixth layer in succession.

'Could it be.....that youngster was still concealing some strength?'

Leaving the mountain pass, He Wude ordered the servants to arrange a big carriage from the Relay Station.

There was naturally no difficulty in obtaining a carriage with his identity. Not long after they had started, they saw He Quanxin, covered in dust, hurrying towards them.

Although the two elders didn't say anything, He Yiming knew the reason they had rushed to him disregarding everything. Seemingly, a flame was suddenly ignited in his heart, gently warming up his entire being to a kind of wonderful realm.

He Wude didn't ask anything throughout the journey, rather returned home with everybody in complete silence and called back all the dispatched people.

After all this, he, along with He Quanxin and He Yiming, entered the most revered place in the entire estate.

The place where Lord Master had spent several tens of years in solitude; the Great Courtyard of He family.

Chapter 22 - Splitting Mountains Thirty Six Forms.

The great courtyard of He family was the oldest courtyard in the estate. Starting from this courtyard, and going through decades, He Wude established the He family estate in Tai Cang county, ultimately obtaining the status of one of the three most influential families in the county.

Therefore, this courtyard held a special position in the hearts of estate's members.

After entering the courtyard and dismissing the servants, He Wude said in a low voice:

"Yiming, recount your experience with Hubin in detail."

After a bit of thinking, He Yiming recounted his experiences and the course of the battle. However, the entire time, he asserted that he only used the sixth level Rolling Boulder Fist. He didn't mention the seventh layer of Internal Energy and didn't even mention the sixth layer of Silk Palm. Of course, he didn't conceal the strange technique employed by Hubin and took out the Splitting Mountain Thirty-Six Forms' scripture.

He Wude accepted the book and opened it. He looked at it for a long time, while He Quanxin and He Yiming helplessly stood at the side, not daring to disturb He Wude's thoughts.

After quite a while, He Wude closed the book. His eyes were faintly closed as he contemplated. Eventually, he let out a deep sigh and said:

"Sure enough, it's what I expected. When this old man heard the news of that traitor injuring two sixth-layer children of Xu family, I had already guessed that this traitor must have learned a Xiantian battle skill scripture. And this is precisely one of the Xiantian battle skill scriptures."

He Yiming, being somewhat astonished, asked:

"Grandfather, what is a Xiantian scripture?"

He Wude couldn't help but laugh before he said:

"Yiming, you need not involve yourself with this stuff. After your Internal Energy attains the tenth layer, I will naturally let you know."

He Yiming made a seemingly miserable sound of agreement. The tenth layer of Internal Energy was easier said than done. His eyes glanced at the scripture, and his lips parted. But he didn't say anything in the end.

However, how could his Lord Father miss the small movements made by him. The former loudly laughed and said:

"Yiming, since this scripture was obtained by you, you naturally have the qualifications to cultivate it."

He Yiming's whole face was suddenly covered in smiles. The might of this skill, he only knew it too well. By employing this skill, Hubin was able to prevail over his battle skill corresponding to the sixth layer's peak. Such an experience, which thoroughly toppled his previous knowledge, had allowed him to know the worth of such a battle skill with absolute

clarity.

He Wude restrained his smiling expression and said earnestly:

"Yiming, just now, I saw that this scripture is a record of a metal-type technique known as Mountain Splitting Thirty-Six forms, three forms short. In our family, it only suits your cultivation."

He Yiming looked at the scripture in astonishment and asked:

"Grandfather, this technique is missing three forms?"

"Correct. For some reason, the last three forms are not present." He Wude regretfully sighed and continued:

"But you should not look down on this technique. In our Book Pavilion, this is unconditionally the best technique in terms of might. If it wasn't a metal-type technique, I would have made all the suitable people to switch to this scripture."

He Yiming was extremely glad in his mind. He promptly nodded while his eyes gleamed with joy and many other emotions.

He Wude's tone suddenly turned strict as he said:

"Yiming, you may learn this technique. However, going by your current strength, you can only learn the first four forms."

He Yiming started, before earnestly nodding:

"Grandfather, your grandson will keep it in mind."

He Wude returned the scripture to He Yiming and said:

"It has been a long day for you. First, have some rest, and keep this scripture with you. After you've copied it down, hand it over to Quanxin."

"Yes." He Yiming respectfully took the scripture.

He Wude again spoke:

"In addition, the fact that you have obtained this scripture cannot be divulged outside. Aside from me or your first uncle, don't let anybody else know about it."

After a brief hesitation, He Yiming asked:

"In that case, what about father and third uncle?"

"They will naturally know..ah...I will also inform Tian-er. The rest don't need to know about it for the time being."

He Yiming said 'yes' and left upon receiving an indication from He Wude.

After he left the great courtyard, He Wude heartily laughed and said:

"Quanxin, Yiming's luck was truly good this time. Not only was he able to temper himself, but even obtained a Xiantian battle skill scripture. Riches are to be sought in dangers; this saying is indeed true."

Quanxin forced out a laugh and said:

"Father, seeking riches from such a danger was too dangerous. If He Yiming had not been a match for Hubin, I'm afraid...."

He Wude's face tensed. He'd lingering fears of such a possibility as well. After a bit of thought, he said:

"It was truly dangerous this time. Fortunately, this Hubin's Internal Energy was only at the fifth layer. Even though he'd cultivated a Xiantian technique, after successively injuring the two children from Xu family, he must have been quite exhausted. Therefore, when he faced He Yiming, he had the spirit but not the strength. Otherwise, this time, He Yiming might not have been able to kill him so easily."

He Quanxin faintly nodded and said:

"Yes. He Yiming's luck was truly good this time."

The father and son exchanged a glance and sighed inwardly. They didn't know that Hubin which He Yiming confronted was not just an arrow that was at the end of its flight, but was the Hubin, who'd already rested after escaping and had basically recovered his strength. If they

had known this, their thoughts would be starkly different.

After returning to his room, He Yiming opened the scripture which was in his hand.

Although his grandfather had warned him to be cautious while cultivating this technique, He Yiming was confident in his affairs. His Internal Energy was not at the sixth layer, rather it had already attained the realm of the seventh layer. Therefore, even if he cultivated six forms, it wouldn't be an issue.

He silently flipped through the contents in the scripture. After a long time, he straightened out the main threads.

This scripture called Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms was indeed missing the final three forms. This fact caused him to be extremely regretful. All cultivators knew that a technique's final few forms were often the strongest ones. Due to the missing final three forms, this scripture's worth was much less than the original.

However, since his grandfather had said that this scripture's might was already the strongest among all the scriptures possessed by He family, he would naturally not miss such an opportunity.

However, after going through the scripture once, He Yiming discovered a strange thing.

This scripture mentioned that one could only start cultivating it after attaining the fifth layer of metal-type Internal Energy, and after that, one

would be able to cultivate the next two forms at every respective layer from fifth to tenth.

In other words, even if He Yiming's metal-type Internal Energy attained the tenth layer's peak, he would only be able to cultivate twelve forms out of the total thirty-six forms.

After realizing this fact, He Yiming's brows tightly creased. He recalled the unfamiliar words his grandfather had said:

This is one of the Xiantian scriptures.

'Could it be...there are higher realms above the tenth layer?'

As soon as he thought this, his mind suddenly turned restless. However, after a short while, he immediately moderated his frame of mind. His current cultivation was merely the seventh layer of Internal Energy. Not to mention the realm above the tenth layer, even the tenth layer was quite far away from him. Currently thinking of these things was truly biting off more than he can chew.

The result of numerous years of his elder's teaching, which said that one should have his feet firmly planted on the ground, could be seen at this moment. He took out a brush and paper, and slowly began to copy the book.

This book had a plenty of content. It was much bigger than the Rolling Boulder Fist or Silk Palm.

It took the entire day for He Yiming to finish copying.

Subsequently, he unhesitatingly started the cultivation. He immediately discovered that cultivating this technique was indeed much harder than cultivating Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm.

Just the two forms corresponding to the fifth layer caused He Yiming quite a headache. The circulation course of this technique was quite diverse, and the primary requirement to cultivate this technique was to accomplish everything in a single stretch. If there was any hindrance mid-way, all the previous efforts would be completely wasted.

Therefore, even He Yiming was unable to succeed right away. He'd to attempt several times before he could meet the technique's requirements. But the strange thing was that the first time He Yiming succeeded, his body seemed to have engraved that feeling. He didn't require much effort when he employed the technique for the second time. He was as smooth and as skilled as if he'd trained millions of times.

He Yiming sighed inwardly. This technique was truly incomparable to the Rolling Boulder Fist or the Silk Palm. He'd spent several hours, but could only learn the first form.

However, he was completely clueless that the original master of this technique, Hubin, after obtaining this technique at the fifth layer, had to bitterly cultivate this technique for no less than ten years before he could completely master its first form. In order to cultivate this one form, he even procrastinated the cultivation of his Internal Energy, and hence, couldn't make the breakthrough to the sixth layer.

On the other hand, He Yiming completely grasped the first within a few hours. And his proficiency also didn't seem any less than that of Hubin's ten years.

If Hubin was reborn and saw this scene, he would certainly die on the spot again.

Three days later, He Yiming carried the scripture to the Book Pavilion. However, later, he discovered that this scripture was not being showcased alongside the metal-type scriptures in the Book Pavilion. He vaguely guessed some possibilities. Perhaps, this scripture was too important, and thus, had been specially stored.

But after going through the life-and-death battle with Hubin, his mind had subtly changed. Even though he'd discovered this matter, he feigned ignorance, neither mentioned it to others.

The matter of He Yiming killing off Hubin birthed a huge commotion among his few siblings. Especially, when they discovered that Hubin had injured Xu family's two sixth layer experts in succession previously, they began to see He Yiming in even more of a new light.

Not to mention the third generation's few siblings, even the three members of the second generation were all the same. He Yiming's status in the family suddenly rose and could even rival that of his eldest brother He Yitian.

Chapter 23 - Advancement Once Again

Tai Cang county's winter; crisp, fresh, and moist air.

At the dawn, in the He family estate's back courtyard, howls of the training of the third generation echoed as usual.

In a corner of the manor, along the third generation's residential yard, a gate silently opened. A figure flashed like a demon before it could be seen standing in the middle of the yard.

He Yiming's head was raised and vision towards the sky. He exhaled a deep sigh, which created a white mist in the morning air.

Five months had already passed since he'd killed Hubin. In these five months, He Yiming didn't step outside even once and remained in seclusion.

Of course, he was far from the realm of being able to not eat food. But the servants would timely take care of his need.

This was the biggest advantage for the children of influential families as they cultivated. In poor households, things couldn't be easy and carefree as such.

Cultivation of these five months had allowed He Yiming's strength to advance by leaps and bounds. Once again, he'd attained the peak of the

seventh layer and the corresponding bottleneck.

If this kind of speed were to be known outside, it would be absolutely incredible and inconceivable. But after making breakthrough after breakthrough, He Yiming was currently numb to these so-called miracles. Therefore, when he attained this realm, he didn't lose his head from fear like the last time and calmly accepted it.

Of course, due to being habitual since the beginning, he didn't tell this news to anyone; not even his own parents.

In these five months, He Yiming's maximum gain was not just limited to Internal Energy. The Splitting Mountain Thirty Six forms gave him the biggest surprise.

This technique was not just limited to palm. In the scripture, it was clearly mentioned that both broadsword and long-axe could be used with the thirty-six six forms.

He Yiming experimented this fact in his room and wasn't disappointed by the results. This technique truly could be used with both bare hands and weapons. It was clearly mentioned in the scripture that in battle, using the heavy-axe would allow one to sweep away everything in his way and the might one could exhibit would be the maximum.

But as soon as He Yiming thought about the weight of the heavy-axe and the Internal Energy consumption, he automatically ignored these words.

During this time, the thing he practiced the most was to assimilate the already learned six forms into the palm and sword techniques. This step couldn't be accomplished just by building a cart behind closed doors. If one doesn't have a considerable battle experience and doesn't repeatedly cultivates, some problems would unavoidably crop up.

However, indescribably, He Yiming was able to do it. He was able to assimilate the six forms into his battle skills and Internal Energy. This process was not complicated, and just like before, it seemed as smooth as the forming of a canal along with the flow of a river.

The process being so smooth even caused He Yiming himself to be at a loss. However, with the nerves that had already turned numb, he was not too astonished by it and approved his success as proper and expected.

After all, for a youngster who'd crossed two bottlenecks in one year, what other miracles of cultivation could possibly be astonishing?

Having the last time's experience with him, as soon as he hit the bottleneck, he immediately left his room and headed to the Book Pavilion.

Upon hearing the shouts of the morning training en-route, he felt quite emotional. Within less than a year, from a child, who was at the fifth-layer and went to the backyard to participate in morning training every day, he had turned into a cultivator who was almost touching the realm of the eighth layer. It was truly an unimaginable, dream-like fantasy.

He moderated his frame of mind and circumvented the backyard.

Every time he entered this big courtyard, he could sense two spear-like gazes pointing at him. These obviously belonged to his eldest uncle and the old servant who lived here.

But their duty was to guard the Book Pavilion, not to hinder the third-generation members who'd attained the sixth layer from entering or exiting. He Yiming was extremely glad due to this fact.

He familiarly entered the Book Pavilion, closed his eyes, randomly walked to a bookshelf, and took out a scripture.

After opening his eyes, he first checked out the bookshelf before he started and forced out a smile. He'd actually selected an earth-type bookshelf. Faintly shaking his head, he opened the scripture in his hand, and his smile turned increasingly bitter.

Breath Control technique: Earth-type supplementary Internal Energy scripture.

This technique was hardly different than the turtle breath-technique. Both were supplementary techniques that controlled body functions and imitated the animal hibernation.

It was comparable to the wood-type supplementary technique, the Skin Tightening technique, he'd chosen the last time. This type of techniques didn't provide too much assistance regarding the Internal Energy, but could come handy in some special situations. For the majority of cultivators, this type of techniques were like chicken ribs.

But since he'd already made the selection, he satisfied himself with whatever he'd obtained. Anyway, his aim was not to cultivate a new primary Internal Energy technique but to cultivate a new technique so that he could break through the bottleneck.

He hurriedly copied down the Breath Control technique. After some hesitation, he copied down the content related to the eighth layer of the Rolling Boulder Fist and the Silk Palm as well.

If he'd not computed wrong, these two techniques would come in handy very soon.

After copying and quickly sorting out everything, He Yiming hurriedly left. He didn't go to pay his respects to his eldest uncle He Quanxin. If he allowed his eldest uncle, that old man, to take a look at the technique he'd in his bosom, he would instead be provoking a scolding.

He Yiming immediately relaxed after he arrived in his room.

He took out the Breath Control Technique's scripture and began to meticulously think over the meaning of its contents. Currently, He Yiming was a seventh-layer cultivator; unconditionally the top figure in the He family's younger generation.

Breath Control Technique was merely an earth-type supplementary technique that could be cultivated as long as one's Internal Energy had attained the fifth layer. Thus, it posed even much less of a problem for He Yiming.

After half an hour, he'd firmly memorized all the contents. Subsequently, he set aside the scripture and circulated the course of the technique.

Despite cultivating such a technique for the first time, his heart was brimming with confidence. And he wasn't disappointed either. Within just half an hour, he'd completely mastered this supplementary technique.

According to the requirements of employing the Breath Control technique, He Yiming completely severed his breathing, and even his body turned cold.

If He Wude could see He Yiming's speed while cultivating this technique, he would certainly be astonished. The latter had accomplished the peak of this technique in merely half an hour. Once he used this technique while exerting all of his efforts, be it the transformation of breath, or pulse, or skin ...etc, he could attain an extremely high standard. Even He Wude himself could only accomplish this much.

However, He Yiming's thoughts were not focused on this technique. After successfully cultivating this technique, he immediately switched to the cultivation of Primordial Energy. He continuously accumulated the Internal Energy at the peak of the seventh layer and abruptly attacked the eighth layer's meridians after all of the Internal Energy had been accumulated.

Just like water drops pierce through a rock, that seemingly unbreakable bottleneck eventually produced a minute opening.

This opening was extremely minute, only allowing extremely fine

threads of Internal Energy to pass through.

However, an ant hole causes the collapse of a great dike.

With the appearance of this hole, the gigantic amount of Internal Energy, which had been accumulated at the juncture of the eighth layer, found itself an outlet. Through this opening, the Internal Energy entered the new meridians in an endless succession, while under the constant assault of Internal Energy, the opening also became increasingly bigger.

Eventually, the Internal Energy, that was accumulated to the extreme, discharged through the opening in an earth-shattering manner, sweeping away all the hindrance.

Endlessly flowing through the channels of the eighth layer, that enormous amount of Internal Energy seemed to howl its victory.

His body was trembling as he silently felt the meridians inside his body faintly shuddering. Even his figure was shuddering with a certain frequency in accordance with the former one.

His heart was brimming with a joy which originates from one's inner being after being promoted to a higher level.

Eighth layer. He'd so easily: crossed over the bottleneck of the seventh layer, surpassed the third generation's number one figure He Yitian, and attained the realm equal to that of his father and second uncle.

Although He Yiming had just attained the eighth layer, he'd confidence

that in an impartial confrontation against his father or third uncle, the ultimate winner would be him.

This was because, in addition, he'd an exotic battle skill: Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms.

The might of this battle skill was no trivial matter. It was far incomparable to an ordinary battle skill. He Yiming had a feeling that as long as he used this battle skill, he could even contend against someone at a higher level than him. As for an opponent of the same level, as long as the latter didn't possess a battle skill that was comparable to his, He Yiming would be absolutely unrivaled.

Likewise, he employed water-type Ripple technique. This time, the process went, even more, smoothly, and he attained the eighth level of the Ripple technique as if it was to be expected and natural.

Subsequently, He Yiming stood up and cultivated, the Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm corresponding to the eighth layer and the seventh and eighth form of the Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms, a few times.

With an effort worth a single day, he'd cultivated all the scriptures he needed to cultivate. Such a cultivation speed once again deeply moved him even though he'd grown accustomed to such things.

Chapter 24 - The Skill Competition At The Beginning Of The Year

He Yiming eventually let out a long sigh after cultivating all these techniques. The huge rock, which had been weighing down on his heart, for the past several months was also finally lifted.

Five months ago, he felt a dense killing intent coming from Xu Xiangci, Senior Xu-second.

Against an eighth layer cultivator, He Yiming wasn't the least bit sure of his chances. Whenever he thought about how such a high-level expert was actually watching him like a predator, he felt his blood go cold.

However, at this moment, he was not afraid anymore. Instead, he was excited; he didn't mind running into the former and exchange some blows in secret. Of course, if he could win and teach him a lesson, that would be the best.

He Yiming slowly calmed himself as he silently thought about the enormous transformation that had occurred during this time period of about a year.

He knew that the source of all of these things was that day's strange encounter in the lake. If he'd not obtained that strange and mysterious opportunity, perhaps he would still be that small youngster who endlessly worried over his breakthrough to the sixth layer, instead of being a high-level cultivator of the eighth layer.

While cultivating for about a year, He Yiming had gradually adapted to

his body's transformation.

Furthermore, he'd also summed up the qualities that made him stand out from the masses.

First of all, as long as he cultivated with a calm heart, be it the primary cultivation techniques, battle skills, or even supplementary skills, his Internal Energy always increased by some amount. Although the extent of the increase differed, the point still held true.

And perhaps this was the cause of He Yiming's cultivation speed being so fast.

Apart from this extraordinary feature, when his Internal Energy attained the peak of a level and touched the corresponding bottleneck, as long as he cultivated a new technique, even including supplementary type techniques, he could easily break through the bottleneck and attain the next level.

This matter defied the heavens to the extreme. He Yiming's age was not much and he was not a sharp and illustrious child prodigy either, but he at least knew that he couldn't tell this matter to anyone; not even to the people closest to him.

Furthermore, ever since his encounter in the lake, he could master any technique in a very short amount of time. Especially, the battle skills; he could attain their peaks without any difficulty whatsoever.

What he found inconceivable was that his physique also seemed to

have gone through an indescribable transformation. Regardless of the attribute of the techniques, he could apparently cultivate them all, and furthermore, the speed and the results of cultivation could cause anyone to be tongue-tied as well.

In addition, He Yiming's true strength lied in the fact that he didn't draw people's attention. The amount of strength he chose to display became his true strength in the eyes of other people. This point could be affirmed by the fact that, previously, He Wude couldn't discern that he'd attained the sixth layer.

These were the various strange transformations that allowed him to attain the realm of the eighth-level Internal Energy within a brief time period of less than a year. Even when taking the whole Tai Cang county into consideration, his true strength could definitely enter the top five rankings.

Of course, this was nothing more than his speculation. Thus, he couldn't be completely certain without actual combat.

Sorting out all the stuff properly, He Yiming returned to his room, when he suddenly heard a soft bell-sound at his door. Faintly started, he opened the room's door and saw his third uncle, He Quanyi, standing on the courtyard's doorway.

He Quanyi stepped forward at once and entered the room. He Yiming respectfully said:

"Third uncle, why have you come personally? If there is something, you could have just asked some servants to inform me."

He Quanyi heartily laughed and said:

"You have been bitterly cultivated for these past few months and haven't stepped outside your room. You didn't even attend a single banquet at the beginning or the middle of the month."

He Yiming's face was slightly red as he said:

"Third uncle, your small nephew has been somewhat neglectful due to being excessively focussed on cultivation and ask for forgiveness."

He Quanyi waved his big hand and said:

"You are so engrossed in cultivation, your third uncle couldn't ask for more." He continued after a pause: "But with your small age, you cannot continue cultivating like this. Interacting with your siblings and others in the family is also very essential. This time, if not for your eldest uncle asking to bring you out, I wouldn't even have known."

Now He Yiming knew why his third uncle would come to his place. He nodded as he listened while maintaining a respectful appearance.

He Quanyi, however, felt that he couldn't see through this small nephew of his. This kind of feeling caused astonished him incessantly. With his experience, even when facing the number one figure among the third generation, He Yitian, he was certain that he could see through the latter. However, why would this small nephew had such a huge transformation in merely a single year?

Faintly shaking his head, He Quanyi pushed this strange feeling down and said:

"Yiming, today is the middle of the month. Have dinner in the main hall with everybody. Your grandfather has already nagged about it many times. If you don't appear any longer, I'm afraid he would rush over here and drag you out himself."

He Yiming's face was slightly red as he said with an awkward laugh:

"Third uncle, you can be at ease. I will certainly be there tonight."

He Quanyi smiled and asked a few questions about He Yiming's cultivation speed. The latter, of course, spouted some nonsense and dodged the bullet. Fortunately, the current He Yiming's cultivation had already reached a very high level. Therefore, he did not make any error in describing the sixth layer. Otherwise, he would not have been able to hide from He Quanyi.

Of course, it was also because He Quanyi was certain that He Yiming couldn't break through the sixth layer within a year. Otherwise, he might have doubted the latter to some extent.

After sending off He Quanyi, He Yiming contemplated for some time before he properly cleaned himself and changed into a new pair of clothes. Upon checking the remaining time, which was not much, he left for the main hall.

Since today was the middle of the month, all of the directly related children must join the banquet in the main hall. Of course, those who were behind closed doors in order to concentrate on increasing their strength were an exception. Though, rarely would someone seclude himself for more than three months. Thus, when He Yiming, who'd secluded himself for five months, appeared in the main hall, it caused a small uproar.

He Yitao had already hopped onto his feets before he pulled He Yiming into the seats of the younger generation. His eyes were wide opened and glistening as he said:

"Sixth brother, you are really ferocious. Secluding yourself for five months, you wouldn't have attained the seventh layer, right?"

He Yiming said with a smile that didn't seem like a smile:

"You tell me."

Waving his small hands, He Yitao said what he'd prepared in advance:

"Sixth brother, don't scare me. As if I don't know. Even if you can attain the seventh layer in three years, that would already be extremely amazing. In this almost half a year, you must have been cultivating some battle skill, so as to show your moves in the Skill Competition, right?"

His words instantly gained the approval of many of his brothers and sisters. Except He Yizhang, whose face was slightly ugly, all the rest of He Yiming's siblings were asking him one after other. But they were all

identically confident that these five months, He Yiming must have been cultivating some battle skill and couldn't have been focussing on Internal Energy.

He Yiming bitterly laughed all the time. In regards to the Skill Competition at the beginning of the year, he was actually looking forward to it somewhat.

In the He family estate, every year's beginning, the third generation of the family would publically showcase their skills. Of course, He Yizhang and others who'd not attained the sixth layer would only display horse stance and other basic sequential movements on the stage, but those who'd attained the sixth layer must fight on the stage.

Though, until now, the winner had always been He Yiming's eldest brother He Yitian. In front of latter's seventh-layer Internal Energy, be it his second brother He Yihai or his third brother He Yixuan, both of them had to obediently step aside.

In truth, this was nothing more than an activity to examine the younger generation's cultivation speed and to motivate them. Sometimes, even He Quanxin and the rest also put on a show. Furthermore, this kind of activity carried out with the air of new year was even more delightful.

Under the constant nagging of He Yitao and the rest of his siblings, He Yiming, without any better options, acknowledged their words that he'd been cultivating a battle skill hiding in his room. As for which battle skill, He Yiming only smiled in response. From the beginning, he never spoke on his own accord.

After a short time, the main hall suddenly quietened down. This was because the Lord Father and the rest had entered the hall.

He Wude swept his gaze through the several grandsons and granddaughters, and nodded with satisfaction. He sat on the host seat, while He Quanxin, He Quanyi, and He Yitian sat opposite to the younger generation.

Except for He Yitian, the rest of the third generation had always feared the Lord Father in their hearts. A pin-drop silence suddenly covered the main hall which was bustling with noise a moment ago.

After the dinner, He Wude lightly coughed and said:

"Quanyi, it's new year next month. Have all the goods been arranged?"

He Quanyi said in a respectful voice:

"Father, you can be at ease. Everything has been arranged properly."

"Good. Let, Quanming and his wife, the couple to return a bit early. Suffering a year outside is not easy."

He Yixuan, Yiming, and Yilong, the three siblings, immediately beamed with joy. They were but the biological children of the couple. Thus, upon hearing an early return of their parents, their mood was vastly distinct from their other siblings.

He Wude's gaze swept through the numerous small bodies as he said:

"The skill competition will also be a bit early. He Yiming has attained the sixth layer this year as well; our He family's young generation is gradually growing up."

His voice was full of emotions and joy. For him, nothing could be more joyous than watching his grandchildren gradually grow up.

He Quanyi made the corresponding arrangements.

Though He Yiming was rather anxious. He wished to make his grandfather happy, but didn't wish to reveal his full strength on the other hand. As such, what should be his performance after one month?

Chapter 25 - Water And Fire Mutual Restrain.

The new year was a joyous occasion for the majority of the people. At least for the He family manor and the surrounding neighbors, this was a rare day to relax.

At the same time, for the He family's third generation, this was a day to exhibit their entire year's achievements.

On new year's third day, all the members of the third generation gathered together, and the wives of He Quanxin and his two brothers could attend as well.

For the sake of the third generation's early independence and future achievements in cultivation, all the children left their parents and lived alone in their own courtyards after the age of five. This method was somewhat cruel, but quite effective. Among the three influential families in the Tai Cang county, the young generation of the He family was, without a doubt, the most outstanding.

At this moment, the training ground in the backyard had been decorated. He Quanxin and his wife, the couple, had also closed the shop in the city and returned. The entire household was sitting together, discussing trivial matters. A warm and joyous atmosphere permeated the entire courtyard.

Seated on the middle seat, He Wude was extremely content as he watched the smiling appearances of his descendants. However, as his vision gazed distantly following a certain direction, his eyes revealed a strange, complex expression; as if he couldn't untie a knot in his heart. It

seemed as though he couldn't let go of a melancholic feeling even on such a joyous occasion.

He Quanxin sighed inwardly. Being the first son, he obviously knew his father's thoughts. But he was, in fact, completely helpless regarding the problem. His vision jumped towards He Yitian and He Yiming as he thought whether they could make the Lord Father's wishes come true.

He Quanxin lightly coughed and said:

"Father, it's about time. Should we begin?"

He Wude moderated his slightly wandering thoughts before he said with a smile:

"All right, begin."

He Quanxin stood up and walked up to the center of the stage before speaking in a clear voice:

"Yi Zhang and the rest of you, come."

Yi Zhang and the rest four, who were still stuck at the fifth layer or below, promptly ran to the stage.

The five of them stood in a line. With another wave of a hand from He Quanxin, hundreds of servants came running at a lightning fast speed. They always trained in normal times, and at this moment, they further

displayed their skill to the peak as they arranged themselves behind He Yizhang and the rest in a short while.

Hundreds of individuals simultaneously bowed towards He Wude before exhibiting the elementary fist techniques.

This was not a battle skill but were fist techniques which strengthened one's body and the children of the third generation who'd not attained the sixth layer practised every day.

As for the servants behind He Yizhang and the rest, they were robust men who cultivated Internal Energy, but, at most, were somewhere along merely the second or third layer.

Although their cultivation was shallow, dealing with ordinary people was not an issue for them. Therefore, this technique, which strengthened one's body, had been imparted to them as well.

Watching synchronised movements of hundreds of individuals, looking like a single entity, indeed had a pleasing feel to it.

As He Yiming watched this spectacle, his mind involuntarily drifted off. Before a year, he was a member of this group and could only practise this body strengthening fist technique that did not rely on Internal Energy at all. However, today, seated in his seat, he was watching them perform. The difference of one step, the fifth and sixth layer, was indeed akin to the heavens and earth.

Hundreds of people's fist training exhibition although seemed

impressive, everybody knew that this was just a demo. Today's main attraction, which people genuinely looked forward, was the upcoming skill competition among the members of the third generation who'd attained the sixth layer.

After a short while, the performance of fist technique concluded and everybody returned to their respective seats. He Wude's big figure rose up before he said a few lines of praise and rewarded silver taels on the spot, to the delight of the crowd.

Subsequently, He Quanxin's clear voice sounded:

"Yi Hai and Yi Xuan."

He Yihai and He Xuan sounded their agreements before they left the side of their respective parents and arrived at the centre of the stage in neither swift nor slow steps.

He Quanxin faintly nodded and said:

"Yihai, Yixuan, another year has passed; how is your cultivation?"

He Yihai and He Yixuan glanced at each other. Their relationship was extremely good, but at this moment, both were brimming with battle intent. The two eyes, which were brimming with dominance and unruliness, when confronted their counterparts, the atmosphere immediately tensed up.

He Quanxin retreated several steps with satisfaction and said:

“Exhibit your entire year’s efforts. Let everybody see your accomplishments.”

The scene turned completely quiet as everybody watched the two individuals at the centre.

This was obviously not the first time these two had exchanged blows in such a situation. Thus, they naturally had no stage fright. They bowed towards each other and immediately started the battle by unleashing their fist techniques onto each other.

Although Yihai was named ‘hai’(ocean), the techniques he was well-versed were actually that of the fire type. As he bombarded his opponent with fists, the technique operating in his body reached the peak, giving off an aggression like that of a blazing inferno.

Fire type techniques were reputed to be the most ruthless techniques. In terms of offense, they were even a notch above the metal-type techniques. One more characteristic of the fire-type techniques was that once a fire-type technique was fully employed, for the most part, the opponent would find himself completely surrounded. If such a situation did not occur, it seemed as if a fire type technique’s might could not be fully exhibited.

At this moment, He Yihai’s quick movements corresponding to his full strength even turned his body faintly red. Seeming like a flame spirit that crazily emitted flames, he made the spectators tremble with fear.

On the other hand, He Yixuan was completely opposite of his brother.

The techniques he was well-versed were that of the water type. Likewise, the battle skill he used was the Silk Palm, which He Yiming was familiar with. Although this technique had been transformed into a common battle skill, its might in an actual combat was not much inferior even when compared to some of the so-called unique battle skills.

As his Silk Palm unfolded, it seemed tepid; his actions didn't seem like that of He Yihai at all, who seemed to have covered the sky with fire.

Despite the two sides not fighting a life-and-death battle, the exchanges between them were extremely influential; a feast to the eyes of spectators. The majority of the people on the scene were moved and were completely engrossed, rendered incapable of diverting their attention.

However, He Yiming's brows were slightly creased. Although the moves displayed by his brothers were pretty jubilant, in his eyes, they were full of holes and gave off a feeling of flower but no fruit.

He silently compared the two of his brothers with Hubin before his expression slightly changed. He discovered that if either of his two elder brothers had encountered Hubin, the conclusion couldn't have been anything but a disaster.

He'd not determined as such because Hubin had knowledge of a ferocious battle skill, Mountain Splitting Thirty Six Forms, but because of the difference in both side's vehemence, skill employment, and other factors.

Hubin's techniques were simple and practical. Even while evading He

Yiming's Rolling Boulder Fist, he was straightforward. A roll on the ground might seem lousy, but with respect to results, it is good beyond what one expects.

While the strikes of his two elder brothers although seemed to fill the skies, the fanciness in their moves, would not likely have much effect during a life-and-death battle.

He Yiming's vision turned towards his grandfather, father, and other elders. Their faces were full of smiles, as if they hadn't inferred anything at all. Feeling strange, he scratched his head:

'Don't tell I am actually seeing wrong....'

However, he didn't know that only because he'd gone through a life-and-death battle with Hubin, he felt as such. Although He Yihai and He Yixuan were a few years older than him, they hadn't gone through such an experience. Furthermore, the duels between peers also wouldn't involve killings, thus, some fanciness in their styles was inevitable.

As for Hu Wude and the rest, although they could see their flaws, correcting them was no easy matter. Only after experiencing several life-and-deaths battle could such a thing be slowly improved. People who could grasp so many profound mysteries just after a single life-and-death battle, like He Yiming, were extremely rare.

After quite a while, He Yihai seemed the first one who was unable to sustain his technique which seemed like a flaring sea of fire. He Yixuan, on the other hand, gradually and silently gained the upper hand.

As He Yiming silently watched, he felt that the actual strength of his second and third brother was approximately the same. In terms of pure Internal Energy cultivation, his second brother, He Yihai, perhaps even had a slight advantage.

However, nevertheless, a short while after the start of the fight, He Yixuan gained a clear advantage, which was gradually turning into victory, and if nothing unexpected occurred, he would be the final victor as well.

He Yiming's brows slightly creased before an enormous question emerged in his mind. He calmed himself and carefully paid attention. After a short while, his discovery slightly surprised him. The Silk Palm of his third brother, Yixuan, could actually restrain the fire type technique of his second brother.

This restrictive power was not strong at all and could even be said to be extremely minute, but with the progression of the fight, this power had constantly been accumulated and magnifying, to the extent of turning into the principal factor which determined the victor.

He Yiming watched for quite a while before his eyes gleamed and gigantic waves rose in heart.

Originally, he had not paid attention to the fact that the five type of Internal techniques could mutually restrain each other. However, at this moment, his cultivation had already reached the eighth layer and after cultivating two different primary Internal Energy cultivation techniques, he'd gradually formed a new understanding towards this point.

Currently, as he watched his second and third brothers fighting against each other using fire and water type techniques, he felt his understanding suddenly increasing by a lot.

For some matters, even if one hear about them several times, it could never be compared to the profound impression one could obtain after personally experiencing them.

Experiencing a life-and-death battle allowed He Yiming to understand that one had to be pragmatic. Today's battle between the water and fire further allowed him to comprehend the dao of mutual restraint among the five phases. Now, he could be considered to have truly entered the palace of five-phase techniques.

Chapter 26 - Water And Metal Techniques

"Ha..." He Yihai ferociously roared, which seemed like a thunderclap jolting the spectators.

Along with the roar, his movements suddenly quickened a lot. His whole being seemed berserk as his vehemence rose to the peak. The sky and earth suddenly seemed to have covered with countless pairs of palms, surrounding and attacking his opponent.

However, his opponent, He Yixuan, still remained unfazed. He Yiming could even feel that the latter's surroundings had turned into a vortex; regardless of enormity of He Yihai's strength, it could only enter but not leave.

As expected, after a few minutes, He Yihai couldn't sustain such an intense consumption. He Yihai pulled back and the countless pair of palms, which seemed to be covering the skies, immediately disappeared.

After Yihai pulled back, He Yixuan didn't press his advantage, instead stood at his position with rapt attention. Though his eyes had a trace of smugness.

He Yihai let out long sigh and said:

"Third brother, dueling with you is really too boring."

An ordinary person obviously couldn't make out much sense in his words, but He Yiming and the clan elders were well-aware in their hearts. A fire attributed cultivator running into a water attributed cultivator and the true strength of both sides being hardly any different, under such conditions, He Yihai would obviously be very gloomy.

He Yixuan laughed and said:

"Second brother, if you switch to wood-type cultivation technique, could you not excel your younger brother?"

He Yihai's eyebrows jumped as he glared at his younger brother, but subsequently, he laughed nevertheless. He Wude and the rest also had faint smiles on their faces. He Yixuan's words were obviously just for fun. How could switching to a different type of cultivation technique be so easy. Only an idiot or someone trapped on a single layer's peak for a long time, like He Yiming, would try to cultivate a different technique.

However, this situation only corresponded up to about the fifth or sixth layer. After cultivating to the seventh layer, basically, no one would choose to give up on his/her choice.

Of course, in a certain legend, even peak level masters chose to change their primary cultivation technique. That was a case of being as lucky as you could get and somehow get your hands on an exceedingly powerful primary cultivation technique. However, such lucky bastards were as rare as feathers of phoenix and horns of unicorn, basically non-existent.

He Quanyi faintly shook his head and said:

"Yihai, you lost, just come down. He Yiming, you are next."

He Yiming bitterly laughed in his mind; his turn had finally come. He took a deep breath as he stood up before he advanced forward in steady steps.

However, at this instant, He Wude's voice sounded:

"Yixuan, you come down. Let Yiming and Yihai compete."

Old man's words immediately garnered people's curiosity. Especially, the family's second generation and the third generation who'd attained the sixth layer revealed expressions of astonishment as they looked towards the old man with slightly puzzled gazes.

Although He Yihai lost to He Yixaun, it was not because former's strength was inferior, but because latter's technique restrained his. Everybody knew that He Yiming cultivated a metal-type primary technique. Thus, if matched against He Yixuan, both would truly compete in terms of strength. However, if matched against He Yihai, would it not be actually restraining him?

For the time being, they couldn't grasp the reason behind the swap of positions.

However, since these words had been spoken by the Lord Master, no one dared to object.

He Yixuan walked down in puzzlement and winked towards He Yiming

as he said:

"Take care."

He Yiming deeply nodded and made a 'don't worry' hand gesture towards the former. In truth, with his current cultivation, which had already attained the eighth layer, how could he truly care about such a competition. His only concern was that what portion of his true strength should he actually exhibit.

Upon setting his foot on the stage, he suddenly felt extremely unwell. He'd previously participated in the fist techniques exhibition, but that was alongside hundreds of other people. However, at this moment, he and He Yixuan were the attention of countless people's heated gazes. Being a fourteen year old youngster, such a feeling was extremely new, but at the same time, also pressuring.

With a slightly red face, he slowly circulated his Internal Energy and calmed down his heart which had been jumping like a small deer. He arrived next to He Yihai, cupped his hands, and said:

"Second brother, please start off leniently."

He Yihai laughed as he said:

"Little sixth, I can't be lenient."

He Yiming slightly started and astoundedly looked at He Yihai, only to see the latter rubbing his hands while saying:

"In these two years, I'd been firmly restrained by Yixuan both the times, and both of us hadn't been able to hold against the eldest brother either. I've really lost more than enough times. This time, against you, I cannot lose."

He Yiming bitterly smiled as he faintly shook his head. Such a fiery and direct temperament, no wonder his second brother chose to cultivate fire-type techniques.

Along with a command from He Quanyi, He Yiming and He Yihai posed themselves.

He Yihai roared as both of his palms, which seemed to flutter in the air, slapped towards He Yiming accompanied by an air-piercing sound.

In an inter-clan skill competition, battles were naturally not life threatening. Although He Yihai and his younger brother had fought for a long time previously, their Internal Energy consumption was actually not that much. Thus, former's strikes contained formidable might and even a faint red color could be seen on his palms.

With a grave expression, He Yiming raised his fists; immediately exhibiting the peak of the sixth layer, he employed the Rolling Boulder Fist. Momentarily, both the figures intertwined together and relentlessly struck against each other.

Under He Yiming's careful attention, his Internal Energy never exceeded the sixth layer. Likewise, the might of his Rolling Boulder Fist also remained corresponding to that of the sixth layer. However, the next

moment, the expressions of He Wude and the rest slightly changed.

As He Yiming's fists flew in the air, everybody felt that it actually carried a sort of profoundness. Furthermore, as the might behind his fists erupted, in the eyes of the cultivators who'd attained the sixth layer and had trained in battle skills, he increasingly resembled a gigantic boulder.

This gigantic boulder was spinning and slowly rolling forward. Although its speed was not much, it didn't felt sluggish at all.

He Quanxin and the rest two brothers exchanged a quick glance, none lacking a jubilant expression.

They understood that He Yiming's fist techniques gave off such a feeling only because he'd thoroughly understood the true essence of the Rolling Boulder Fist.

As imposing as a boulder and spinning as fast as lightning; these are the most important key points of Rolling Boulder Fist.

Although almost everybody knew the true essence of this fist technique, among the metal-type cultivators, rarely anyone could actually grasp it. According to the experience and knowledge of He Quanxin and the rest two, people who could exhibit Rolling Boulder Fist to such a level could be counted on fingers.

They subsequently recalled He Yiming's fight with Hubin six months ago. Now, He Yiming's victory didn't seem a mere stroke of luck.

The more He Yihai fought, the more gloomy he became. He Yiming clearly cultivated in metal-type techniques, logically, the latter should have been restrained by his fire type techniques. Furthermore, only six months had passed since the latter advanced to the sixth layer. However, in the current exchange of blows, somehow, he once again found himself in a disadvantageous position.

He Yihai's complexion was faintly red. Losing to his second brother was related to the mutual-restraint of their techniques, but if he again lost to his sixth brother, he would truly lose too much face.

As his thoughts reached this point, his expression became extremely grave. His fist-moves changed. His every fist now carried a fiery gale, and even the skin on his body began to turn faintly red.

He Yiming suddenly felt the pressure increasing many folds. Unfortunately, he didn't have enough experience to know the technique the technique his second brother had used. As this technique was employed, he actually felt sort of choked. From this he could ascertain that this was his second brother's trump card.

At this point, he actually felt as if his Rolling Boulder Fist was going to be split opened. He immediately realized that this was because the strength behind it was not enough.

Instantaneously, several thoughts flashed through his mind, and he abruptly went along with an extremely strange notion.

Instead of promoting his Rolling Boulder Fist to the seventh layer or employing Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms, his circulating Internal

Energy, which was the metal-type Primordial Energy, transformed into that of the Ripple technique.

Next moment, He Yiming's movements seemed to have relaxed. His fist technique had not changed and was still that seemed like a surging boulder sort of metal-type fist technique, however, it actually gave off a boundless and continuous feeling like that of flowing water.

He Wude and the rest first started, then opened their eyes wide with astonished expressions.

For them, He Yiming's fist technique had actually transformed into something they couldn't grasp. His technique was clearly metal-type Rolling Boulder Fist, however, when it unfolded, it gave off an unceasing feeling like that of flowing water.

This was absolutely inconceivable. Since when metal-type techniques could feel like water-type techniques. They looked at each other's faces while thinking....this world is too bizarre...

On the other hand, currently focused He Yihai had already suffered enough. The fist technique, that he'd dashed out with all his effort, had apparently sunk down in a mud puddle and couldn't break free. He roared before shouting:

"Stop."

He Yiming immediately restrained his fist. He'd just conformed water-type Internal Energy to metal-type battle skill, but actually obtained

unimaginable results. However, upon seeing his second brother flipping out, he promptly retreated a few steps.

He Yihai was gasping and looking at He Yiming as his countenance turned increasingly depressed.

"Sixth brother... impressive. I lost."

Apart from He Wude and a few other individuals, rest all immediately went in an uproar. No one expected, He Yihai, who had been majestic and awe-inspiring just a moment ago, would actually admit defeat on his own accord.

As the crowd was murmuring in low voices, a youngster in white clothes arrived on the stage and said in a clear voice:

"Sixth brother, how about we try for a bit."

Suddenly, the entire backyard turned completely silent. The individual who'd posed the challenge was unexpectedly the number one figure in the third generation, He Yitian.

Chapter 27 - Fight And Victory.

Cool wind blew, bringing faint rustling sound of trees, which resembled soft murmuring of a crowd.

In He family's backyard, at this moment, no other sound could be heard other than the rustling of wind.

In He family estate, He Yitian was an illustrious figure. Especially in the third generation, he'd been naturally approved as the individual with the best future prospects.

Even in the clan's evening banquets, his seat was the best among the third generation.

This was not merely because he was the eldest grandson of the eldest son. He'd obtained the approval of the everybody based on his own outstanding talent in cultivation.

Attaining the sixth layer at the age of fourteen, attaining the seventh layer at the age of nineteen, He Yitian, who was currently twenty-two years old, was well-reputed in the entire Tai Cang county. Even while taking all the three influential families into consideration, he was a top-notch expert.

This was because the third generation of the other two families didn't have a single seventh layer cultivator.

He Yiming had also attained the sixth layer at the age of thirteen, but if he couldn't attain the seventh layer before the age of twenty, in everybody's eyes, he and He Yitian couldn't even be compared.

As for He Yiming attaining the seventh layer before the age of twenty, that was an ambiguous matter. No one could say anything with certainty.

After all, the difficulty of attaining the seventh layer indeed far surpassed the previous ones. Even He Yitian couldn't explain how exactly did he manage to pass through this obstacle.

Therefore, when He Yitian stood up on his own accord and posed a challenge to He Yiming, the spectators felt it inconceivable.

After quite a while, He Wude suddenly laughed and said:

"Yiming, your eldest brother has requested you for a duel; why don't you fight for a bit."

He Yiming deeply glanced at his grandfather and the eldest brother before faintly bowing his head and saying:

"Yes."

He Yihai discontentedly walked off the stage before exchanging a glance with He Yixuan, both thinking what was their eldest brother up to.

In the past, every time, they would act together against their eldest

brother only to be defeated ultimately.

Thus, they were extremely clear on their eldest brother's strength, and also in deep reverence. These days, although their sixth brother had emerged as a new force, if one were to say that he could compete against their eldest brother, they absolutely wouldn't dare believe it. Thus, they also couldn't understand why would their eldest brother take the initiative to fight.

He Quanyi was extremely proud as he watched these two outstanding nephews of his. A time period of merely ten years since the establishment of the family in the Tai Cang county was undoubtedly the shortest history among the three influential families. However, He family's third generation was undoubtedly the most determined among the three. He Quanyi had no doubt that once their third generation grew up, the position of the number one family in the Tai Cang county would undoubtedly belong to the He family.

Retreating a few steps, He Quanyi commanded the commencement of the most outstanding battle among the youngest generation.

With one hand on his chest, He Yitian made a gesture of invitation. He Yiming was also not polite. Crisscrossing his two fists, he advanced forward in huge strides like a rumbling boulder.

Just after a short while since the start of the fight, everybody could see why He Yitian was reputed to be the number figure in the third generation. Unwittingly, he'd already gained an upper hand.

He Yitian primarily cultivated earth type techniques. His figure was

standing at the centre of the stage, with his legs separated like the character '八', resembling a deeply-rooted tree. Regardless of how He Yiming attacked, he stood like a mountain. He was softly waving both of his hands around his body, easily splitting apart He Yiming's relentless Rolling Boulder Fists.

This was the strength of the seventh layer. In front of absolute strength, even after grasping the true essence of a battle skill, there was no possibility of victory.

After fighting for some time more, He Yiming surprisingly felt as if his arms and legs had stuck. As if tied together with heavy stones, he found it difficult to use them.

If his Internal Energy truly had been at the sixth layer, he feared that he would not have been able to continue. However, he could continue because his Internal Energy was even one level above He Yitian.

He Wude's eyes began to shine. He Yiming's performance had far surpassed his expectations.

Currently, He Yitian was twenty-two years old. He'd already cultivated earth-type techniques for seventeen years. The true essence of earth-type techniques, attack through defense and steadily press forward, had thoroughly been comprehended by him long ago. It seemed as though he hadn't taken the initiative to attack, however, every time both sides exchanged blows, an extremely minute Internal Energy was left coiled around He Yiming's body.

Furthermore, He Yitian's earth-type technique seemed a deep pit,

gradually pulling He Yiming deep inside it. Even ceasing the assault and pull away was extremely hard for He Yiming.

Under such circumstances, He Yiming continued to forcibly hold on. Although his movements seemed to have become quite sluggish, he never stopped. This kind of situation caused spectators to be at a loss. How could he actually preserve for so long?

After a bit of thought, a Xiantian scripture appeared in He Wude's mind, 'Could it be...He Yiming has already cultivated and obtained some accomplishment....'

As his thoughts reached this point, he abruptly shouted:

"Yiming, no need to keep concealing, show a bit of your true skill."

This moment He Yiming's mood, just like Yihai's a moment ago, was quite gloomy. Upon hearing the Lord Father's shout, his expression suddenly sharpened a little.

He had no idea that the old man had been referring to the Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms, instead, he thought that the latter had seen through his cultivation.

'Since it's already out, there is no need to conceal anymore. But this, after all, is not a life-and-death battle. In any case, I should leave some face for eldest brother..'

Thereupon, with a light shout, the Internal Energy in He Yiming's body

abruptly accelerated and instantly upgraded to the seventh layer. Practically at the same time, the Rolling Boulder Fist also upgraded corresponding to the peak of the seventh layer.

In between his relentless fists, one could actually hear a faint tinkling sound like that of a metal. With every strike, the fist wind, as if a sharp blade scraping through, could cause one's skin to ache.

Seventh layer Primordial Energy conformed to the seventh layer Rolling Boulder Fist. As if the mixing of water and milk, the two complemented each other and their might rose to the peak.

He Yitian's expression transformed. In his eyes, his sixth brother's figure had suddenly started to seem lofty, causing him to actually feel as if he would not be able to resist. Even more inconceivable was that the two arms of his brother seemed no longer made of flesh, but had instead transformed into two big choppers, which were blustering about in front of him while producing rustling sounds.

The earth type techniques were famous for fearsome defense, however, He Yitian felt that his defense would not be able to hold out against such an extremely sharp offense of his brother.

He Yitian's expression had already turned extremely serious. His fist energy [1] completely converged within a square unit around his body. At this moment, he seemed like an immovable gigantic rock.

[tl : [1] = I'm not sure what 'fist energy' here represents. As I remember this term was used by author once before, but at that time, it was used in context of throwing punches.]

However, Yiming's assault was getting increasingly fierce. His Rolling Boulder Fist seemed like countless meteors cascading down the sky, attacking the immovable gigantic rock. First, second....countless....every strike would cause the rock to faintly shake, meanwhile, the amount and frequency of strikes incessantly increased. Gradually, it actually felt as if the gigantic rock would be submerged.

After another short while of fight, He Yitian's face had an unusual complexion, and his mind had a single thought...resist, resist...and resist more.

He was certain that his sixth brother had definitely attained the seventh layer, but not long ago. Although the metal-type techniques were extremely formidable in terms of might, at the same time, they were also the most lacking in terms of endurance. Thus, as long as he could survive this chain assault, he could certainly achieve the victory in the end.

However, even though he encouraged himself as such, in his perception, his sixth brother's Rolling Boulder Fist just simply didn't resemble a metal-type technique, but seemed enduring like a water-type technique. The ferocious assault, with each strike stronger than the last, seemed everlasting.

Resist...Resist....

Cannot resist anymore!

He Yitian's two legs, ultimately, incapable of holding the ground, slowly took a step backwards.

However, this one-step retreat was already enough to transform the expressions of He Wude and the rest.

The majority of the spectators could not unravel the mysteries behind it, but the few of them were aware that He Yitian was going to lose this battle.

"Halt...."

A loud shout came out of He Wude's mouth, jolting He Yiming out of his intoxicated assault. He immediately restrained himself and stood at his position. He Yitian naturally stood straight as well while facing him, though his eyes were full of astonishment.

He Wude turned his vision towards the spectators, who were at a complete loss, and said: "Your fist techniques has improved a lot since last year. This old man is very glad. Let's end today's skill competition here. Quanyi, double the silver that is to be rewarded."

Immediately, countless cheers erupted down below. Although the Old Master had abruptly halted the fight, in front of the double rewards, the servants naturally overlooked a small spectacle.

He Quanyi immediately sounded his agreement in a loud voice and personally moved to take care of this matter.

He Yitian was about to speak, but after receiving a glare from He Wude, he obediently closed his mouth.

Waving his big sleeves, He Wude said:

“You all leave, He Quanxin and you two, along with He Yitian and He Yiming, come with me.”

Chapter 28 - Change Of Position

He Wude silently went into his courtyard. The second generation and the third generation's He Yitian and He Yiming followed him in.

Everyone preserved silence. He Yiming was quite apprehensive inwardly as he whined to himself, 'I've already heeded you, old man's, words. Don't tell me you won't settle on anything less than me suddenly exhibiting eighth layer Internal Energy and absolutely crushing the eldest brother...'

While his imagination was running rampant, He Wude made himself comfortable on the host seat and said:

"Yiming, you broke through the sixth layer?"

He Yiming slightly started before cursing inwardly, 'Were you not the one who asked me to show a bit of my true skill? What are you again asking for?' His thoughts stirred, and he suddenly had an idea, 'Don't tell he hadn't seen through my depths at all?'

Several gazes instantly converged on He Yiming. The latter awkwardly laughed and said:

"Grandfather, your grandson has truly attained the seventh layer Internal Energy."

He Wude sighed before his eyes gleamed as he suddenly stood up from his seat, arrived before He Yiming, and extended his palm.

After a slight hesitation, He Yiming, circulating the Primordial Energy to the seventh layer, met it with his own palm.

After a brief contact, both sides restrained their Internal Energy. He Wude's face immediately revealed an extremely content smile, and the last shreds of the doubt in the minds of the rest also dissolved away.

He Quanyi spoke in a clear voice: "Father, how did you find out that He Yiming had broken through?"

The rest all nodded. If the old man hadn't already discerned that He Yiming broke through, how could he have asked latter to show his true skill.

He Wude's face was slightly red. When did he discern that He Yiming had broken through? He'd only shouted that line because he himself wanted to take a look at how ferocious a Xiantian scripture could be.

However, he didn't expect that instead of using the Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms, He Yiming would give him an even bigger surprise.

Seventh layer Internal Energy. It was actually the seventh layer of Internal Energy. For a child, who was barely fourteen, to possess the seventh layer Internal Energy, especially in a minor influential family such as theirs, was as rare as founding feathers of phoenix or horns of unicorn. Suddenly, a thought, which he didn't dare believe, appeared in his mind

for an instant, 'Don't tell me the heavens have truly taken pity on my old self, allowing me to return in this lifetime.'

He sighed before he suddenly felt heated gazes of his descendants. He moderated his expression before saying, "How did this old man find out? This old man found out with his ample experience. Listen up you people, you should be attentive in every case. Only after experiencing many many things could your eyes be as sharp as lightning."

He Quanxin and the rest simultaneously sounded their agreements in respectful voices and treated the teachings of the Lord Master as just and profound. But He Yiming was doubtful, 'If the old man could truly see through, how could he not know that my Internal Energy has already reached the eighth layer?'

However, even if he had twice as much courage, he wouldn't dare ask.

He Quanyi suddenly asked: "Yiming, when did you break through?"

The several gazes immediately shifted over. As they thought about how, just a year ago, He Yiming had attained the sixth layer, and in less than another year, he was already at the seventh layer, they couldn't help but feel that this speed was a bit too horrifying. To say the least, before today, they didn't know that anyone could even accomplish such a thing.

Although He Wude, on surface, didn't seem to be battling an eyelid, in truth, his eyes and ears were increasingly sharpening up. He was not willing to miss a single detail about this grandson of his. He too was extremely wishful to know about the latter's cultivation speed.

He Yiming said while scratching his head: "My breakthrough wasn't long ago, not long ago at all."

Inwardly he supplemented, 'Not long ago, just half a year.' He overlooked that he'd made another breakthrough after another half a year, though.

Everybody nodded one after another, not doubting He Yiming's words at all.

For them, attaining the seventh layer from the sixth layer within a single year was already astonishing. As for attaining the seventh layer in half a year, that was just too far away from their imagination. It was something incomprehensible to them.

He Quanming stepped forward and lightly patted his son on shoulder, with his eyes full of arrogance. However, calming down after a short while, he curiously asked:

"Yiming, how did overcome the bottleneck of the sixth layer?"

He Yiming seemed to be seriously thinking before he shrugged and said: "I don't know."

Everyone sighed inwardly. He Yiming's luck was indeed not bad. The difficulty of passing the bottleneck varied from person to person. Some, like He Yiming, were able to indescribably pass through. However, a lot more found themselves stuck at this step and remained stuck for their entire life.

He Quanming's brows slightly creased as he asked:

"What you used just now was the Rolling Boulder Fist, yes?"

"Yes."

"In my opinion, your employment of Rolling Boulder Fist has already attained the peak realm since you can use it as per your wish. What's this about?" He Quanming asked in a puzzled manner.

He Yiming heart sank. This was indeed flawed. Under the several heated gazes on him, he pondered for a bit, then bluntly said:

"I also don't know what's going on. I learned this fist technique in a single go."

He Quanming's vision suddenly turned queer as he asked:

"Learned in a single go? You suddenly grasped the true essence and attained the peak of the battle skill of this layer?"

"Yes", He Yiming forced the words out. Since anything he said wouldn't make much sense anyway, he decided to let out a bit of truth.

Everybody looked at each other's faces. If not for a living example in front of their eyes, they would never have believed such a thing.

After quite a while, He Wude said with a deep sigh:

“Yiming’s body composition particularly conforms to the metal type techniques. Whether it’s cultivation techniques or battle skills, it holds true in either case. Such a talent emerging in our He family is nothing but our ancestor’s blessings.”

Subsequently, upon thinking about He Yiming’s performance nine years ago, their final shreds of doubts were resolved.

Nine years ago, before hitting the bottleneck of the fifth layer while cultivating the Primordial Energy, He Yiming had seemed to be riding on the wind as he improved at a lightning fast speed. Even He Yitian, in his childhood, was far inferior to the former.

He Yiming remained stuck at the bottleneck of the fifth layer for several years, but it instead seemed to have tempered him. Therefore, once he broke through, as if finally setting about after a rigorous preparation, he was currently unstoppable.

He Quanxin faintly nodded and said, “Good. Seventh layer Internal Energy and seventh layer’s peak battle skill. Our He family’s third generation now has another seventh layer cultivator.”

He Quanming’s brows slightly rose up as he said:

“Three months ago, Xu family’s Xu fourth broke through the eighth layer and attained the ninth layer. During this time period, Xu family have

been extremely haughty. I wonder what would be their reaction upon hearing about He Yiming.”

He Wude coarsely laughed and said, “Quanming, you need not worry. The Xu-fourth, Xu Right, has attained the ninth layer after the age of forty. If he doesn’t come across a heaven defying fortune in his life, he won’t be able to improve further at all.” He glanced at He Quanxin before continuing, “Your eldest brother although is not young, he has already been at the ninth layer for several years. Perhaps in another ten years, he will have an opportunity to break through. Once our He family produces another tenth layer cultivator, in the overall scene of Tai Cang county, Xu family and Cheng family would no longer have the qualifications to challenge our He family.”

The Lord Master’s voice was brimming with joy. He family’s current situation was indeed due to his many years of hard work. During the course of events, he naturally had some scuffles with the local tyrant namely the Xu family and Cheng family. Although, currently, these matters had diluted for the most part and He family estate had firmly found its footing in the Tai Cang county, during the initial years, Xu family and Cheng family did try to completely press the He family down. Therefore, now, He Wude definitely wouldn’t be courteous.

Everyone sounded their agreements, with their eyes having a trace of anticipation and heartfelt joy.

Suddenly, a sound of bell rang in the estate. He Wude raised his head and thought for a bit before saying:

“Yiming’s matter, for the time being, need not be disclosed.”

He Quanxin and the rest started for a moment, but not daring to question the Lord Master's words, they helplessly sounded their agreements in a low voices.

He Wude stood up while saying:

"It's already dark. We will go to dinner."

Under He Wude's guidance, they arrived in the main hall.

The rules in the He family were quite strict. Even the wives of He Quanxin and his two brothers were not allowed to sit together. Even the opportunities every year to meet the children, after they turned five years old, were not much either.

This all was done to improve their self-disciplinary capabilities. Not allowing them to meet their parents frequently, allowed them to walk much farther on the path of cultivation.

He Wude made himself comfortable on his seat before the rest sat down on their seats.

They awaited the Lord Father to pick up his chopsticks. Otherwise, they wouldn't dare eat even if they happened to be hungry.

To the surprise of everybody, He Wude didn't begin like he did usually. He swept his gaze through the people before saying: "Yiming, come

here.”

He Yiming stood up from his seat and arrived before his grandfather, “Grandfather, what are your instructions?”

He Wude faintly smiled, turned his head, and nodded once towards He Quanyi. The latter, tacitly understanding, ordered a servant to place another seat.

The faces of everyone immediately turned different shades.

Originally, there were only five principal seats. Apart from the Lord Master himself, there was only the second generation and the third generation’s He Yitian.

Even the rest two members of the third generation who had attained the sixth layer, He Yihai and He Yixuan, didn’t have the qualifications for this seat.

However, looking at He Wude’s such an attitude, even an idiot could understand the intent.

He Wude pointed towards the seat and said: “Yiming, from today, this is your seat....”

After being surprised for a short while, He Yiming absent-mindedly sat down under the vision of everybody.

The vision on him had astonishment and awe, joy and excitement, but, unavoidably, also some envy and frustration.

Especially He Yizhang, the sense of loss in his eyes was clearly visible.

Focussing back on himself, He Yiming couldn't describe what he was feeling. However, he was certain of one thing. The difference between him and Yizhang would only continue to grow, and their paths would also never cross again in this life.....

Chapter 29 - Xiantian Battle Skill.

After the dinner, He Wude shared the news of Yiming's breakthrough with the core members of the younger generation and asked them not to disclose it.

When they found out that He Yiming had actually attained the seventh layer, they immediately understood why had the Lord Master treated him so favourably and allowed him to sit on the principal seat before their two brothers who were elder than him.

A seventh layer cultivator, and on top of that, a barely fourteen year old youngster; if such a matter leaked outside, it would storm the entire Tai Cang county.

Three months ago, Xu-fourth attained the ninth layer. However, in comparison, He Yiming attaining the seventh layer would certainly cause a much bigger sensation.

After all, Xu Right attained the ninth layer past the age of forty, which estimated this layer to be the final step for him. However, He Yiming was different. A fourteen year old, seventh layer cultivator; the potential of such an individual simply couldn't be measured. No one could say how far will he go in the end, but attaining the eighth layer in the next ten years was almost certain.

In other words, he was undoubtedly a future tenth layer cultivator.

After disclosing this matter and concluding the banquet, He Wude yet

again brought the rest to his courtyard.

Upon returning, he asked in an amiable manner: "Yiming, how is your cultivation of that [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms] going?"

"I have learned six forms. Although I wouldn't dare say mastering the forms, but I should be able to use them somewhat." He Yiming respectfully said.

He Wude nodded with satisfaction:

"That's a Xiantian battle skill for you. Being able to use it after mere six months is already amazing. Quanyi, go train with Yiming. Let's take a look, in the end, what exactly is the might of a Xiantian battle skill."

"Yes", He Quanyi faintly smiled and stepped towards He Yiming. Both of his hands were behind him, however, the aura around his body exploded like that of a rising sun on its own.

He Quanyi, like He Yihai, was a cultivator of fire type techniques. However, in comparison, he was much more experienced and his Internal Energy was at the eighth layer. Although, like He Yihai, he didn't have an imposing aura like that of surging oceans of fire, the feeling of omnipresence he emanated was far out of He Yihai's reach.

Upon looking at He Yiming's stance of Rolling Boulder Fist he'd just assumed, He Wude's brows slightly creased as he said:

"Yiming, use Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms."

He Quanyi's eyebrows faintly rose and his splendour reached the clouds as he said:

"Yiming, don't hesitate using your full strength. No need to be courteous."

Yiming forced out a laugh. The old man didn't know but he was extremely clear on this technique's might. In his opinion, even fighting a higher level cultivator and achieving victory was not difficult.

If he truly used this technique with full might, his third uncle might not be able to preserve.

He Yiming took a deep breath and circulated his Internal Energy, instantly attaining the seventh layer of the metal-type Primordial Energy. Feeling the circulating Internal Energy, he raised his both hands high above, and at the same time, emanated an intense, substantial aura.

"Third uncle, please take care."

None as exception, the expressions of He Wude and the rest changed slightly. Even the Lord Master had never expected that conforming a Xiantian battle skill to the seventh layer of metal-type Internal Energy could actually bring forth such an aura.

The smile on the face of He Quanyi had long since vanished. His face had a grave expression, which was a stark contrast to the carefree expression he'd previously.

He Yiming had not even struck, yet the rest indescribably felt themselves tensing up.

He Quanyi's legs aligned themselves in a position that resembled the character '八', and his hands faintly waved around his body. From his manner, he was clearly using a profound battle skill. This technique must focussed on the defensive power. A wisp of Internal Energy rippled around his body, seeming like a thick, hard shell covering his body.

He didn't go on offense; firstly, he cultivated defensive techniques for the most part, and secondly, he knew that the old man wanted to test the might of a technique. Therefore, he was focussing completely on defense.

Everybody could see Yiming's figure, yet everyone had different feelings about it.

Upon substituting themselves in He Quanyi's position, they unexpectedly discovered that He Yiming's stance seemed full of holes, but the aura corresponding to it actually had an air of never retreat, only forward as if wishing to be a broken jade rather than an intact earthen-tile. (Tl: Death rather than disgrace.)

Standing in front of the current He Yiming, none of them could have brought themselves to attack him.

This feeling was so intense that even He Wude felt a chill in his heart.

He suddenly realized that his grandson had not just mechanically

memorized this battle skill, instead he was thoroughly displaying both the battle skill's essence and a sort of unparalleled vehemence that only a Xiantian battle skill could contain.

Even though his strength was inferior to his opponent, with respect to the aura, he didn't lose out one bit.

The only thing they couldn't understand was that how He Yiming could grasp the true essence of a Xiantian battle skill as well? Could it be...

Practically at the same time, the same thought appeared in the minds of all the individuals present.

Could it be...Yiming truly was a super genius with respect to metal type techniques? Furthermore, the extent of his talent had already stepped beyond their understanding?

He Wude and his descendants subconsciously glanced at each other. Surprisingly, from each other's eyes, they were able to mutually confirm their notion. The Lord Father's eyes increasingly gleamed as he watched. A deeply buried wish, which he thought he would never be able to see being fulfilled with his own eyes, started to brew despite his attempts.

He Yiming raised his left foot while his right leg stood firm like Mount Tai. However, his calf and thigh muscles were intensely trembling.

After a few trembles, surprisingly, from the bottom, a large amount of Internal Energy began to spread around in his body. An ordinary person may not understand, but the individuals present here were all at or above

the seventh layer. From the intensity of trembling, they could feel that this Internal Energy would definitely produce an incomparable might.

He Quanyi's face turned even more solemn. He was not prepared for such an unorthodox move at all.

Suddenly pushing with his right leg, He Yiming's left leg swiftly stepped out. As a shooting star catching up to the moon, he arrived in front of his third uncle.

Just in a single step, as if a streaking bird, he had already covered the distance between him and his third uncle

His both hands, which were raised high above, chopped down on his third uncle.

This strike was as quick as lightning. Assuming him and Quanyi as two points, former's one step had been along the the line joining the two, not deviating in the slightest. Moreover, the stance he had assumed seemed to have further aroused his spirits to the extreme. His two palms, as if two giant hammers splitting apart a mountain, resolutely smashed downwards.

He Quanyi's countenance eventually changed, and an appalled expression surfaced in his eyes.

So powerful; it's actually this powerful. Could such a might still be corresponded to the seventh layer Internal Energy?

Having already spent half of his lifetime, he'd experienced life-and-death battles and the might of his old man's tenth layer Internal Energy. However, he had to admit, he'd never ever seen such a frightening battle skill. This battle skill emanated a feeling of staking everything on a single move. Furthermore, those two arms, which seemed to have turned into iron blades that could split apart anything, actually evoked a feeling of impending death in him.

His two fists rapidly whirled across his chest. At the most critical juncture, He Quanyi instead threw out the fear from his heart, and the aura around his body turned extremely scalding. Displaying his several decades of fire type techniques' cultivation, his entire being turned into a burning sphere in the perception of others.

However, He Yiming's two successive palm strikes, as if huge blades chopping down on a bundle of firewoods, forcibly split apart the sphere.

Along with a loud explosion, He Quanyi's figure flew out like a snapped off kite.

With a flash, his old man's figure appeared, and with just a stretch of hand, counteracted the Internal Energy on his body. However, the enormity of the strength behind was far beyond what He Wude had expected, and even he was forced a slight retreat as he landed on the ground with He Quanyi.

He Yiming pulled his hands back and stood with an astonished expression in his eyes.

Just now, he'd used the sixth form of the [Mountain Splitting Thirty Six

Forms] along with the seventh layer Primordial Energy, which could be regarded as the maximum might he could exhibit at the seventh layer.

He originally thought that even against an eighth layer cultivator, he would be able to stand his ground. However, he never anticipated that the might of this skill would be so formidable that under its oppression his third uncle wouldn't even be able to dodge and instead would be forced to stake his all. Furthermore, even after staking his all, he would be blasted away without being able to resist at all.

The seventh layer battle skill actually blasted away an eighth layer cultivator. Furthermore, from He Quanyi's pale complexion, it was clear that he'd suffered an internal injury. Such sort of result was truly a bit too terrifying.

All the visions once again concentrated on He Yiming. Even his own father, He Quanming, was astonished.

His move's might, although may not be able to frighten heavens and tremble earth, it was enough for everybody to raise their evaluation of him to another height.

Chapter 30 - The Truth Straightaway

Facing the vision of everybody, He Yiming forced out a laugh while scratching his said before he said in an innocent voice:

"It wasn't me. It was Grandfather and third uncle who asked me to use all of my strength."

In his mind, he supplemented, 'Really fortunate that I judged the situation correctly and didn't truly use my full strength. Otherwise, if I had used my best move, the eighth form with the eighth layer Internal Energy, third uncle wouldn't have just been simply blasted away.

As his vision found his eldest uncle, he suddenly had a thought, 'Since I can fight someone at a higher layer relying on this battle skill, wouldn't it mean my true strength is on par with the eldest uncle? It might be even above..... Could it be...I have unwittingly turned into the number two expert of the family....'

However, this thought just surfaced in his mind for an instant. He had no interest in going before his eldest uncle and fight for this title.

Everybody withdrew their gazes, with expressions of not knowing whether to laugh or to cry.

He Wude extended his hand and patted He Quanyi a few times; so as to assist him clearing a few blocked channels.

After a while, He Quanyi painfully coughed a few times before waving his hand and saying:

"Father, I am all right. It's nothing; my internal organs have received a shock, that's all. Cultivating three or five days would do."

He Wude heavily sighed and said:

"I truly didn't expect that this battle skill's might would be so formidable. If used with full strength, I'm afraid even Quanxin would have paid dearly due to being caught off guard."

Quanxin deeply nodded. He was in complete agreement. If He Yiming had suddenly used this form on him, he very likely would have been caught off guard. However, his strength was much higher than his third brother, therefore, he wouldn't have been in such a sorry state.

As one went higher in the Internal Energy cultivation, the increase in difficulty also became equally higher. However, likewise, the higher one went, the disparity in levels also became equally higher.

This stance could send He Quanyi flying. However, if He Yiming had come across He Quanxin, even causing the latter to take one step back would have been amazing in itself, and on the contrary, the former might even have suffered the backlash due to the exceedingly formidable Internal Energy of He Quanxin.

He Wude turned his head and looked at an awkward He Yiming; his

gaze full of appreciation.

This grandson of his had not only stepped beyond his expectations in the Internal Energy cultivation, but even more so in the cultivation of battle skills, the latter had already attained an inconceivable realm.

However, he was also clear that He Yiming being able to exhibit such strong might had to do with the Xiantian battle skill as well. Otherwise, relying on the common battle skills in the He family's Book Pavilion, latter would have been absolutely incapable of reaching such a level.

At this moment, he even began to envy He Yiming. In the He family manor, the latter was the only person who could cultivate metal-type techniques. None of the rest, including him, had metal-type Internal Energy.

He Wude said with a deep sigh: "Yiming, you have done very well."

He Yiming promptly bowed his head and said:

"Grandfather, your grandson didn't injure third uncle intentionally."

He Wude couldn't help but laugh before he said:

"I am aware. This is not to be blamed on you."

Only then Yiming relaxed. He looked at He Quanyi, who had his brows slightly creased, before cautiously asking:

“Third uncle, how about I first take you back to recuperate?”

He Quanyi, not having a good mood, glared at him and said:

“Yiming, your third uncle is not so weak. It’s nothing more than a slight, insignificant internal injury.

Looking at the dense beads of sweat covering his face, He Yiming sweated profusely, ‘This is called as insignificant?’

He Quanxin stepped forward and gently kneaded He Quanyi’s back, pouring a thick Internal Energy into his body, which began to slowly circulate in his meridians.

He Quanyi straightened his body, and his breathing, which seemed somewhat quickened, began to slowly stabilize.

As He Yiming quietly observed their actions, he suddenly had a flash of realization.

His father, He Quanming, primarily cultivated in wood-type techniques. According to the theory of five phases, wood could birth fire. Furthermore, in five phases techniques, wood-type techniques were the best for treatment, and their effect was much potent even than the water-type techniques.

Therefore, after receiving treatment from his father, his third uncle felt

immediately better, and the latter's internal injuries also seemed to have pacified somewhat.

In comparison, his grandfather and eldest uncle although had Internal Energies that were incomparable to his father's, neither of them cultivated in wood type techniques. Thus, they could only watch from the sidelines with their hands tied.

After another short while, He Quanming withdrew his hands. A trace of red could be seen on He Quanyi's face, and by his appearance, he didn't seem ill anymore.

The latter stood perfectly straight as he sincerely said:

"Yiming, this move of yours is truly dreadful. Your third uncle had already exerted his entire strength but still failed to resist. Xiantian battle skills are actually this ferocious."

He Wude lightly sighed and said:

"Xiantian battle skills are the battle skills cultivated by those strong people. Their might is obviously far incomparable to ordinary battle skills. Unfortunately, among us, Yiming is the only one who cultivates in metal-type techniques. Otherwise, allowing others to try their luck would have been possible."

Upon hearing these words, everybody was quite moved. Especially He Yitian; seeing that his sixth brother was actually this strong, all sorts of feelings welled up inside him. After hearing his grandfather's evaluation,

he actually felt like discarding his current primary cultivation technique and turn towards metal-type techniques.

He Yiming blinked his eyes. He'd suddenly recalled that during today's Skill Competition, he had used water-type Ripple technique together with the metal-type Rolling Boulder Fist. Although that was the result of a sudden inspiration he'd felt, the might it produced was not bad at all.

After a slight hesitation, he asked:

"Grandfather, must [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms] be only cultivated with a metal type primary cultivation technique? Using it with other techniques could at least be tried, right?"

The eyes of He Quanxin and the rest simultaneously shined. Although they know that chances of such a thing happening were not much, after seeing this technique's might, who would not be tempted?

The several visions simultaneously turned towards He Wude, hoping to hear the good news from his mouth.

He Wude bitterly laughed before he said:

"Put a rein on your imagination. This is but a Xiantian battle skill. Not to mention the fact that the cultivators who don't cultivate metal-type techniques as their primary techniques are eternally unable to grasp the mysteries within, even among the cultivators who cultivates a required technique, you may not find a single one who is able to comprehend such a technique in a hundred of them.

As everybody heard these words, their spirits greatly diminished. All of them knew that the Lord Father wouldn't fool with them on such an important matter.

He Wude patted He Yiming's shoulders and said:

"The difficulty of cultivating a Xiantian battle skill cannot be compared to that of ordinary battle skills. You can attain such a level on your own without any guidance is absolutely genius."

He Yiming embarrassedly smiled. Regarding this assessment, he was extremely ashamed in his mind.

As if suddenly recalling something, He Wude's smile gradually disappeared and was replaced a solemn expression as he said:

"Yiming, while cultivating this technique, did you run into any troublesome difficulty?"

Under such a solemn vision, He Yiming couldn't help but feel nervous. Giving it a serious thought, he firmly shook his head after a while, "Grandfather, your grandson didn't run into any difficulties at all."

He Wude pondered for a bit before suspiciously asking:

"In that case, while cultivating this technique, did you feel anything strange?"

This time, He Yiming indeed nodded his head right away.

"What is it?", He Wude impatiently asked. Even the rest also stood with rapt attention, wishing to hear He Yiming speak of his experiences.

Under the numerous gazes, He Yiming straightened his chest and said in a clear voice:

"Learning this battle skill was very easy; possible to master in a single go."

He Wude couldn't help but purse his lips up, He Quanxin and the rest two sucked in a cold breath, and He Yitian ashamedly lowered his head.

With frozen expressions, they looked at each other's faces with resentment in eyes.

The hardships, pain, and strain of cultivating battle skills couldn't be inferior to that of the Internal Energy cultivation.

And even this was only for common battle skills. For a Xiantian battle skill, the difficulty would surely be two folds, or three folds...or might even be ten folds higher.

If not for these circumstances, within He family manor, there wouldn't have been the rule that forbade the cultivation of battle skills before the sixth layer. Furthermore, among the majority of cultivators, those who'd

not been deemed to have less future prospects in terms of Internal Energy cultivation, wouldn't likely cultivate battle skills with all their efforts.

He Wude and the rest might have cultivated all five types of battle skills, but the time they spent on the same couldn't be compared to that of the Internal energy cultivation one whit.

It could be said that the cultivators who had been able to attain the realms comparable to theirs had certainly suffered the pain of cultivating battle skills.

However, He Yiming was different. Although he'd suffered the pain of being stuck at a single layer in the Internal Energy cultivation, as far as the cultivation of battle skills goes, he had a completely smooth journey and hadn't felt the least bit of hindrance. Thus, he was absolutely incapable of experiencing what these individuals were feeling. Furthermore, in his opinion, his words were the truth; the truth that came from the bottom of his heart.

It was just that this truth was a bit too much to handle for these people.

After a short while, He Wude said with a deep sigh:

"Yitian, Yiming, you can leave first."

He Yiming and his brother both sounded their agreements and left side by side.

Looking at their retreating figures, He Wude said:

"Quanxin, from today, you need not monitor Yiming's cultivation anymore. Whether he wants to seclude himself for one year, or he wants to go out to amuse himself, you need not interfere. Let him decide everything at his own convenience."

Quanxin said with a bit of hesitation:

"Father, Yiming is only fourteen, if allowed to do as he pleases, I'm afraid he will step on the wrong way."

He Wude's lips curled down a bit as he said:

"Not likely. I have faith in Yiming. He is a genius; a genius who is beyond our imagination. For such a genius, our experience is nothing but a rope, and he shouldn't be restrained in the slightest. Like an eagle, he should be provided freedom to soar in the sky. Only then he would be able to improve the fastest and not follow in our footsteps."

He Quanxin and his two brothers exchanged glances with each other. Recalling the words He Yiming had just said, all of them silently gave a slight nod.

He Wude took a few steps and walked out of the building. Looking towards the sky, he murmured:

"There is still sixteen years left before Yiming turns thirty. Within these sixteen years, can Yiming breakthrough the tenth layer and advance to

Xiantian....”

Behind him, the three brothers once again exchanged glances with each other; their eyes full of anticipation.

Chapter 31 - Jealousy.

"Yiming, thank you."

After walking out of the courtyard alongside He Yiming, He Yitian suddenly stopped walking and solemnly said.

He Yiming astoundedly turned his head and puzzledly looked towards the former before asking:

"Eldest brother, why are thanking me?"

"During the Skill Competition, fortunately, you didn't use this Xiantian battle skill. Otherwise, it wouldn't have been me just admitting defeat."

He Yitian said with a bitter smile.

Indeed. After experiencing the might of [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms], He Yitian didn't have a shred of doubt. He was clear that if he had been in place of his third uncle, he certainly wouldn't have been able to come out in one piece.

He Yiming rolled his eyes and said with a straightforward smile, "Eldest brother, you must be joking. We are brothers, and exchanging pointers between brothers is in no way some life and death battle. Of course, I wouldn't use Xiantian battle skill", Pausing for a bit, He Yiming then suddenly asked, "Eldest brother, you know what are Xiantian battle skills?"

He Yitian hesitated a bit before saying:

“Once grandfather unintentionally revealed that Xiantian battle skills are considered as the techniques of Xiantian cultivators. Such sort of techniques claim extremely high aptitude and are not something ordinary people could successfully cultivate.”

He Yiming’s both eyes shined as he hurriedly asked:

“How are Xiantian cultivators different from us?”

Faintly shaking his head, He Yitian said:

“Sixth brother, grandfather said that before reaching the adulthood, it would be better to not know.”

“Why?” He Yiming puzzledly asked.

“Because before adulthood, stabilizing the mind is not easy. But then again, before adulthood, when one’s mind is at its purest, is also the most optimal time,” He Yitian paused before continuing, “Grandfather once said that some big influential families absolutely don’t allow their children to cultivate battle skills before the age of twenty, so that they could have the best achievements in the Internal Energy cultivation. Although our family is not that strict, grandfather doesn’t wish us to know too much, and thus, end up affecting our state of mind.”

He Yiming immediately understood and nodded his head. He'd directly experienced this matter. Back in the day, him being stuck at the bottleneck of the fifth layer had a lot to do with other's expectations on him, weighing down on him like a mountain. It had started to restrain him, making it impossible for him to break through.

In the same way, if everyone was informed that in case they attained the sixth layer after the age of fifteen, they would not have much achievement in the Internal Energy cultivation, he could absolutely guarantee that not a single one in the third generation could attain the sixth layer smoothly.

With a sincere smile, He Yitian said, "Yiming, before your mind completely stabilizes, don't aim too high," he deeply sighed before continuing, "Xiantian cultivators are truly too distant from us."

He Yiming was slightly moved as he said:

"Eldest brother, I am also clear. Xiantian cultivators are even above grandfather in terms of Internal Energy, isn't that so?"

He Yitian faintly started before saying with a bitter smile:

"That's right. Indeed, after knowing the existence of such individuals, it's not hard to guess."

He slightly pursed his lips as if thinking something before eventually saying:

"Sixth brother, grandfather has very high expectations of both of us. He hopes that we will be able to step into the Xiantian realm. However, as far as I know, I basically have no chance of doing so. Our He family's future hopes rely on you alone."

He Yiming promptly waved his hand and said:

"What are saying, eldest brother? Who can be certain about the future? If you truly didn't have any chance, grandfather and the eldest uncle would have given up long ago. You need to get yourself together."

He pondered a short while with head down before smilingly nodding. However, on the inside, he was still depressed as before.

The brothers parted their ways, and He Yitian returned back to his courtyard. The first thing he did was to train his fist techniques a few times. However, his mind was becoming increasingly restless, and he was unable to find that previous, Mount Tai like calm and steady feeling.

He knew that this was the change his envious heart had brought upon him.

For his sixth brother, who had emerged as a new force, his heart had indescribably birthed an intense, hard-to-describe envy.

At this moment, he somewhat understood why would his fifth brother, Yizhang, be hostile to his sixth brother in such a way.

His sixth brother had attained the fifth layer before the former. He

didn't understand it when he'd not gone through such an experience, but now he knew. So it turned out that human heart could actually birth envy so easily, and even more so due to the accomplishments of people close to you.

He sighed deeply, clearly knowing that his state of mind had somehow become twisted. He was also aware that such a state of mind was as deadly as poison for him. If he couldn't rectify it, he shouldn't be thinking of making any breakthrough in the Internal Energy cultivation.

However being aware is one thing and truly accomplishing is another. He restlessly walked in the training room, incapable of pacifying his thoughts.

Suddenly the bell in the training room rang up, startling him. He immediately left the training room and opened the main door, only to see his father, He Quanxin, standing outside.

He promptly welcomed his father in and said:

"Father, why have you come?"

He Quanxin faintly smiled as he looked at his son with a gaze that possessed worldly wisdom and ability to see through. Under his gaze, He Yitian actually felt as if his thoughts were out in front. He lowered his head while feeling apprehensive inside.

He Quanxin suddenly asked:

"Yitian, are you depressed because Yiming has surpassed you?"

"No, I'm not." He immediately shook his head. However, even he himself was not convinced of his words.

He Quanxin sighed and said:

"Yitian, how do you feel my relationship with your third uncle and second uncle is?"

He Yitian thought for a bit and said, "Extremely good."

"Correct, it's indeed extremely good," The smile on the face of He Quanxin completely vanished before he calmly said, "However, when we were young, we also had arguments and even treated each other as strangers."

He Yitian astonishedly opened his mouth, wishing to speak. He had faintly guessed something but couldn't be certain.

He Quanxin nodded and said:

"That's right, you guessed right. Back in the day, your father's cultivation advanced by leaps and bounds, far away from their reach. Therefore, they were envious of your father, and it almost separated us."

He Yitian astoundedly asked:

"Then what happened afterward?"

"Afterward... your second and third uncles figured out. They acknowledged their eldest brother and took the responsibilities of the trifling matters in the estate and the business in the city, allowing me to wholeheartedly cultivate. Otherwise, I wouldn't have been able to reach my current realm."

He Yitian's face was a shade of red and green. He understood the intent behind his father's words. However, even though he had the notion, how could he instantly change? He once again lowered his head in silence.

With his intelligence, he was aware that his father's toned down words concealed a sort of helpless and sad feeling.

Acknowledging.... how could such a matter be easy?

Since he was in the same position as his second and third uncle were back then, he understood how difficult it was to acknowledge.

He Quanxin's gaze softened as he said:

"Your grandfather, all alone, arrived in the Tang Cang county and laid down such a strong foundation for the family. Even to this day, Xu family and Cheng family are stalking us from the sidelines. They both are big influential families, the roots of which goes way past several hundreds of years and foundation immeasurably and unimaginably deep. Our He family must be united if we want to survive. We cannot have internal strifes because of selfish motives."

He Yitian respectfully said :

"I understand, father."

"No, you don't understand," He Quanxin solemnly said, "When the war break breaks out outside, if He family's younger generation can't twist together to form a rope, what awaits us will be nothing but destruction."

He Yitian's body slightly trembled before he abruptly raised his head and said:

"Father..."

He Quanxin waved his hand and continued, "If He family truly collapses, you think Xu family and Cheng family would be lenient?"

He Yitian's face twitched a few times as his fists clenched.

He Quanxin turned around, his voice turning extremely soft yet carrying a strange force:

"Yitian, as the eldest member of the third generation, you should be extremely clear on what you need to do. Back in the day, the few words that your grandfather said to your second and third uncle, I pass them onto you today. If there is He family estate, we can have all the power, pleasures, glory at the flip of the hand. If there is no He family estate....how will eggs grow under a broken nest.

Watching his father's swiftly retreating figure, He Yitian silently pondered for a while. His state of mind intensely fluctuated, as if he'd once again returned back to today's Skill Competition.

After witnessing his sixth brother's advancement speed and [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms], he suddenly had a heavy, powerless feeling. Especially, within the third generation, he was a crane among a group of chickens. However, once this feeling of superiority was taken away from him, his self-confidence suffered a devastating blow.

However, at this moment, a different notion had appeared in his mind. If his sixth brother could truly breakthrough into the Xiantian realm in future, would there still be a power that could contend He family?

These words were not blurted out merely on a spur. After a long time, he let out a long sigh. Although he couldn't transform his way of thinking in a short term, he'd started to work towards it.

Similarly, he also understood that once he'd figured it out, it would also prove highly beneficial to his future cultivation.

Looking towards his sixth brother's residence, He Yitian bitterly smiled. This was perhaps a physiological barrier he must overcome.

Chapter 32 - Eighth Layer Bottleneck.

He Yiming didn't know how enormous of a change the new year's Skill Competition would bring for him.

Since that day, his status indescribably had a huge change. He could even feel that in his grandfather's eyes, he had already replaced his eldest brother's position.

This kind of feeling made him quite apprehensive. Especially, the faint hostility he felt from his eldest brother made him even more worried.

Being a fourteen year old youngster, such a change, which was related to the ways of world, gave him quite a headache. Moreover, he had no way to rectify the situation.

After all, if not for the encounter in the lake, he would have still been an ordinary youngster. And how many of the ordinary youngsters could deal with such a messy situation?

Thereupon, he opted for the simplest of the alternatives. He once again secluded himself.

He was extremely thorough with this time's seclusion.

Apart from the servants bringing him daily food and replacement of clothes, he completely isolated himself in his room.

Of course, evading the strange atmosphere in the manor was one of the reasons, but the principal cause was that he wished to attack the Xiantian realm his brother had spoken of.

After that discussion, he had no doubt that the cultivators of the Xiantian realm were above his grandfather in terms of cultivation. For him, this was a new discovery and also a new objective. After discovering the existence of such a realm, his heart was extremely moved.

His thoughts had never been so stirred, even when he was stuck at the fifth layer and trying every means possible to break through. Neither did he long for that as much.

He had a vague feeling that after receiving the fortune in lake, if he did not strive and advance to the Xiantian realm, he would surely suffer the retribution of heavens.

Day passed away like seconds, marking the end of approximately another half a year.

In his training room, He Yiming was sitting crossed-legged. His palms, feet, and head maintained a certain orientation, representing the stance of Five Cores Towards The Sky. [1]

[tl: [1] = Stance is like this.

]

In his body, the Primordial Energy was surging and flowing, like lake water, following the course of the eighth layer.

After a short while, he suddenly sprang to his feet, extended both of his hands, and as gently as silk, waved his hands, employing the Silk Palm. His whole being, seeming like the gluten, emanated a soft and gentle feeling. However, this soft and gentle feeling had the strong and indestructible metal-type Internal Energy behind it.

During the Skill Competition, He Yiming, through a lucky break, was able to conform water-type internal Energy to the Rolling Boulder Fist, which resulted in an unimaginable might.

He Yihai's sixth layer, fire-type technique was actually unable to restrain the Rolling Boulder Fist of that moment, which nobody could understand no matter how they tried to think. However, after He Yiming revealed the seventh layer Internal Energy and the might of [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms], everyone was convinced.

However, only He Yiming knew that his gaining the upper hand during his fight with He Yihai had nothing to do with his Internal Energy or Xiantian battle skill. Instead, it was the result of him fusing metal and water, the two different type of techniques, together.

During these six months, after experimenting countless times, he eventually understood that when two distinct type of techniques are conformed to each other, the might produced is often times simply unimaginable. However, the thing he doubted was why his grandfather and other elders seemed clueless about this. They had never mentioned anything such as this to him.

As his palm softly and lightly fluttered in the air, he arrived before the

flexible wall, and in a seemingly casual way, struck ahead.

The strike didn't produce any sound, as if it hadn't hit anything and the wall didn't seem to have moved either. However, when He Yiming raised his palm from the wall, the surface had one more palm impression.

This palm impression was extremely clear. Even the hand lines could be clearly seen, as if the wall wasn't made of steel, but mud.

Of course, the impression was not deep. It still hadn't reached the level of the ninth level, but had already reached that of the eighth layer's peak. Even He Quanming and He Quanyi, the two brothers, might not be able to easily leave behind such a clear impression on a wall made of steel like this.

In the Internal Energy cultivation, the difficulty of further improvement became increasingly hard, but so did the corresponding might. At the eighth layer, the impression left behind was far incomparable to a mere dent.

He Yiming slowly exhaled the impure qi in his chest. His eyes shined, knowing that currently, he had officially attained the peak of the eighth layer.

Half a year, once again, just half a year was all he took to attain the peak of the layer he resided. This kind of speed just couldn't be said as monstrous or frightening anymore, it was simply demonic. If He Yiming was not certain that he had not grown another hand, arms, or anything else, even he would have doubted if he was still a regular human.

According to his father and other elders, the time required to attain the peak of the eighth layer from its initial stage should be estimated in a unit of years. Moreover, this unit should at least contain two figures.

In other words, even a genius would require ten years or more before advancing the Internal Energy from the beginning of the eighth layer to its peak.

On this point, even his exceedingly talented grandfather and eldest uncle were the same.

However, at this moment, He Yiming was hundred percent certain that he had truly attained the peak of the eighth layer and had touched the bottleneck. Because regardless of whichever technique he cultivated, his Internal Energy didn't improve at all. This was precisely the feeling he would have while touching a bottleneck.

Faintly shaking his head, he threw out the strange feelings in his mind. He was extremely pleased as he looked at the clear impression on the wall. The eighth layer was so powerful, then what about the ninth layer, or the tenth layer? One step further, if he could attain the Xiantian realm, what level his strength would reach? This truly was something to look forward.

He sucked in a deep breath before his brows slightly creased. One and a half year had passed since he began to dent the wall. Although he had not tested the might of his battle skills everyday, his strikes had caused the flexible wall to be uneven. It was nowhere near its original appearance.

Normally, he could have asked the servants to replace the wall. However, at this moment, he hesitated. After all, his true strength was not known in the manor. However, if this flexible wall was to be taken out, wouldn't it expose every bit of his true strength?

After a long consideration, his eyes slightly shined. If the wall were to be taken out as it was, perhaps people would be able to make out the lines. In that case, if he utterly messed up the surface, who would still be able to figure out the marvel that used to live within?

His lips curled into a smile. It just so happened to enable him to check out the might of [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms] corresponding to the eighth layer as well.

He took half a step back and raised both of his hands high above while his Internal Energy had already attained the peak of the eighth layer.

The moment his hands were raised, his aura instantly underwent a complete transformation.

If one were to say that originally, he was a naive youngster, this instant, he emanated boundless awe and pressure. This was not just a change in his complexion and expression, apparently, even the air surrounding his body had been subjected to his influence.

[Three Forms Short Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms]; the transformation this ferocious and formidable Xiantian battle skill brought was not a strong battle power anymore, rather at an extremely slow pace, it would change his temperament and inner qualities.

If He Yiming continued to cultivate under such circumstances, after attaining a certain level, just a stare would be enough to form an intense aura, as in a cultivator's aura, pressing down on someone to death.

The two arms chopped downwards. Their speed was not fast at all, however, as if piercing through the space and time, they had already struck the wall the next instant.

A loud explosion echoed, and He Yiming's two hands, as if a giant hammer cutting down a mountain, firmly slashed apart the entire wall into two.

From head to toe, the entire wall was ripped into two parts.

The wall, which was made of flexible steel, had been ripped apart like a paper. Surprisingly, He Yiming hadn't felt the least bit of resistance. And his palms' completely intact momentum, further made him feel like keep on destroying.

Along with a loud screeching, ear-piercing sound, the two parts of the flexible wall flew in the air and heavily struck at the room's wall, emitting a sound corresponding to an even more heavy strike. Deafening sounds reverberated throughout the room..

As if being stimulated by this sound, He Yiming's both eyes surprisingly had a trace of strange, red colour.

His body, as if lightning, pounced forward. In mid air, both of his hands were once again raised above his head, and this time, his movements

were even more quick. His both hands slashed like a knife, producing an air-piercing sound which was getting increasingly louder and clearer.

Chapter 33 - Advancing To The Ninth Layer.

"Sha, Sha, Sha....."

Under He Yiming's almost crazy, successive strikes, the poor wall was being shredded into pieces. Likewise, under such a powerful assault, the entire basement faintly shook and dust rustled down from all side walls. The entire room buzzed.

However, regardless of the number of dust particles, not a single one came within one meter surrounding He Yiming's body, seeming as if an invisible wall was blocking everything outside.

Eventually, when the entire wall was completely shredded apart, He Yiming also sobered up from his frantic state.

He withdrew both his palms and spread his legs in the '八' position. However, he only preserved this position for a moment before he sat down on the ground, gasping severely then coughing the next instant because of inhaling too much dust.

He wished to leave, however, his body, as if powerless, seemed paralyzed on the ground.

He suddenly had two completely different type of feelings.

After his crazy session of venting, he felt extremely content and rejuvenated. As if his body was on clouds, he felt extremely light and

ecstatic..

However, at the same time, he felt empty, as if his body was in the void. This kind of feeling was not pleasant at all. Imagine a person losing his/her weight and both legs separating apart from the ground; it was that frightening.

He Yiming closed his eyes and calmly comprehended these different feelings. He suddenly discovered that his understanding of the [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms] had increased.

This was just a feeling, without a shred of evidence to back. However, he was extremely confident. The next time he allowed himself to act in such a manner, the might produced would certainly be a notch above.

After a while, he slowly stood up as a trace of Internal Energy welled up in his body. The feeling like that of an empty canvas he felt from his body just now after exhausting almost all of his Internal Energy had eventually disappeared.

Sweeping his vision, as he looked at the mess of a room, he didn't know what to think.

Surprisingly, just the eighth layer Internal Energy's [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms] exhibited such a strong might. Such a might was absolutely incomparable to that of the common battle skills such as Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm.

He Yiming even felt that perhaps his eldest uncle, relying on his ninth

layer Internal Energy, could only hope to attain such an inconceivable might.

Perhaps, in the entire manor, the Lord Master, He Wude, would be the sole individual capable of attaining such a level.

He Yiming suddenly thought, 'Don't tell me...I can already contend against the grandfather and his tenth layer Internal Energy,' If this was true, in the entire Tai Cang county, his strength could most definitely enter the top three.

The room was still permeated with dust, and his body had a layer of grey color. Looking at the condition of room, restoring everything to normal in a short time span seemed impossible.

Suddenly, he heard a noise coming from the training room's entrance. He Yiming was slightly alarmed; he never had to face such a situation before.

It should be known that the training rooms could be considered as private spaces for the third generation members. This was the place they used for cultivation; even their fathers would not enter without their consent.

Even if they wished to summon their children, they needed to pull the small, specially-made bell and let them know that someone was waiting above.

Therefore, when he heard the sound, his vigilance heightened on its

own. The Internal Energy in his body had not resumed to the optimum, but as long as the intruder was not as strong as his grandfather, he had complete confidence in his ability to defend himself with the help of the [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms].

"Yiming, are you alright?"

His third uncle's loud and clear voice could be heard. He Yiming started and rushed to open the door. Upon opening the door, as he saw several people outside, he stared blankly.

Apart from his third uncle, several of his siblings and a few servants were nervously sizing him up. However, the next moment, their faces revealed quite strange expressions.

"Yiming, on your body...how long have you not bathe?" Quanyi asked, not knowing whether to laugh or to cry.

If not for the fact that He Yiming's face had not changed, he wouldn't have dared to believe that covered in dust before him was the genius nephew of his.

Looking at his body, He Yiming awkwardly laughed and said:

"Third uncle, I was merely training, you are..."

"Training? What kind of technique were you training, causing such a big commotion?" He Quanyi asked with slightly creased eyebrows.

He Yiming asked a few questions and discovered the cause. When he had been using the [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms], the echoes in the basement had actually affected the surface. Even the two basements next to his had been faintly shaking.

In one of these two training rooms, when his third brother, He Yixuan, faintly felt his room shuddering, he was naturally quite astonished. Subsequently, he found his third uncle, and they came to his place along with few others. However, upon pulling the bell, they discovered that it was already broken, which made them apprehensive.

After discovering the whole story, He Yiming had a whole new understanding of his Xiantian battle skill. Furthermore, he also understood that the basement was no longer the paradise where he could quietly train.

With He Yiming's explanation, they understood the cause, though only He Quanyi was the sole person to realize that He Yiming had certainly been cultivating that mysterious Xiantian battle skill. Only then could the latter create such a huge commotion.

After urging He Yiming to be careful, everybody left. Although He Yixuan and the rest were still suspicious, in the presence of He Quanyi, they didn't dare run their mouths.

After everybody left, He Yiming summoned his servants. The basement was swept clean, the small fragments of the wall were disposed, and another flexible wall was placed. Though this time He Yiming didn't intend to try his hand.

After everything concluded, He Yiming walked to the Book Pavilion in slow steps, pushed the door open, and entered directly.

He casually selected a book. Surprisingly, he selected a supplementary-type scripture once again.

Vitality Strengthening Technique: Water type Supplementary technique.

Looking at the thin book in his hand, He Yiming had an urge to change the scripture.

To breakthrough, he had randomly selected scriptures three times. However, he hadn't expected to select Supplementary type Internal Energy techniques all the three times.

Could it be....he and the supplementary techniques had some special fate together? Otherwise, how could he possibly make three such selection in row?

After considering for a short time, He Yiming unenthusiastically placed the book on the table nevertheless. He didn't try to make another selection since he had long since decided that everything would comply the fate.

Obtaining the fortune at the lake and no longer needed to be concerned about breakthroughs, what else could he claim? Perhaps he was bound to learn several kinds of supplementary techniques by the will of heavens.

After copying the book, he carefully placed the original scripture at its position and left for his courtyard with the copied book.

As soon as he entered the courtyard, he saw his eldest brother standing with hands behind back.

He Yiming promptly greeted, but he was still somewhat nervous inside.

He clearly remembered, after the new year's Skill Competition, his eldest brother's attitude towards him had gone a subtle transformation. Of course, this transformation was extremely obscure. If not for his perception abilities being extremely sharp, he wouldn't have been able to discern at all.

"Eldest brother, you came."

"Yes. It had nothing to with third uncle speaking about your ferocious training." He Yitian said with a brilliant smile.

He Yiming was slightly stumped as he observed He Yitian's eyes. Those black eyes had already regained the former clarity and calm.

This moment, the feeling his eldest brother gave him was the same warm, gentle, jade-like feeling of the former times. The feeling of 'blood is thicker than water' once again welled up in He Yiming.

He Yiming instantly knew that the former eldest brother had returned.

Furthermore, he felt a sort of strange transformation in the latter. He Yiming could sense dense vitality from his body, and his strength also seemed to have shot up by a huge amount.

Of course, no matter how hard He Yitian tried, he could not catch up to He Yiming.

He didn't know what happened to his eldest brother in these six months, but the transformation he'd gone through was sufficient to cause He Yiming go mad with joy.

Originally, he was quite worried over the problem of the family's internal strife, but at this moment, it seemed to have been as easily solved as a bamboo splits against the knife.

The two individuals merrily chatted for quite a while. After making sure He Yiming was safe and sound, He Yitian left relieved.

Subsequently, He Yiming entered his brand new training room in high spirits and immersed himself in cultivation once again.

Perhaps due to his cheerful state of mind, this time's breaththrough was the most easy in He Yiming's opinion. Everything went as smooth as flowing water forming a canal. He didn't have to exert any effort at all.

The next day, both of his primary cultivation techniques had been smoothly promoted to the ninth layer.

After the second day, his Rolling Boulder Fist and Silk Palm had also

attained the realm corresponding to the ninth layer's peak, and their might would be much stronger than it was before.

After five days, he had been shaken to his core when he assumed the stances of the ninth and tenth forms of the [Splitting Mountain Thirty Six Forms]. He could feel how extraordinary the might of this battle skill actually was.

At this moment, he felt an unmatched delight. In his heart, he had a sort of extreme confidence.

Perhaps, within the entire Tai Cang county, no one could prevail over him from this moment.

Chapter 34 - Cheng Family's Banquet

In the main hall, everyone was having the dinner together.

As a result of sitting together with He Wude and other elders, He Yitian and He Yiming didn't dare neglect their manners. On the subsequent seats, He Yiming's siblings although didn't dare make too much of a fuss, the atmosphere was much more lively there.

Today was yet again the middle of the month, and all the children had appeared to dine in the main hall; even He Yiming was not an exception.

Ever since he discovered that his eldest brother had returned to his old self, He Yiming's interest in seclusion had been greatly diminished. Usually he trained non-stop, but joined everybody for the dinner on the middle of month.

Although the transformations in the interaction among the two brothers were subtle, the third generation couldn't discern them. However, how it could possibly be concealed from He Wude, the man with rigorous schemes and deep foresight.

Only when the relationship between the two had completely resumed as it had always been, he was able to completely relax.

The Lord Master was gratified as he looked at his descendants gathered together. It was only due to his efforts in these past several decades that He family currently flourished. He even felt that the day

when the He family would be Tai Cang county's sole tyrant was not too far.

Of course, to change their dreams into reality, they still needed perseverance and hard work.

He withdrew his vision, picked up the cup in front of him, gently took a sip, and said in a clear voice: "Quanyi, what's in the Second's letter?"

"Father, after five days is the birthday of Xu family's Ancestor. Second brother has already prepared a present, and he asks someone from the manor to deliver it."

He Wude made casually waved his hand and said:

"You can make a quick trip for this matter. There should be no mistakes, leading to the loss of our face."

"Yes," He Quanyi slightly hesitated before saying, "Father, second brother said that this time, among the Xu family's members selected to go to the Cheng family, Xu Right's name is present."

He Wude slightly started and said with raised eyebrows, "Xu Right, the Xu-fourth who advanced to the ninth layer?"

"Precisely. Xu Right is a martial lunatic. He is already above forty, yet has not married. After striving for decades, he was able to advance to the ninth layer; the sole expert in Xu family's second generation who has the chance to attack the tenth layer." He Quanyi said with a grave expression.

"Ninth layer..." He Wude slightly nodded and contemplated a bit before suddenly revealing a disdainful sneer, "Xu family... this is their display of strength to the world."

"Yes. Father, currently, a ninth layer expert has emerged in Xu family's second generation as well. Even the Cheng family has to see them in a new light. If Xu family plans on suppressing us in Cheng family's birthday feast, that would be somewhat troublesome."

He Wude coldly snorted, "What trouble. Wishing to suppress us? As if I would let them. Quanxin..."

"Yes."

"This time, under your lead, Yitian, Yiming, as well as Yihai and Yixuan, you all will go," A fierce expression flickered in the eyes of He Wude as he said, "I want all the people of Tai Cang county to understand that whether it's the second generation or the third generation, our He family is the most outstanding."

The sonorous and powerful words of the Lord Master shook the spirits of all the young generation. They all had scorching luster in their eyes.

This was not a matter of personal grudges, but the social glory. Especially, the gazes on He Yiming and He Yitian had faint admiration and reverence. Although they all were the siblings of the same generation, this moment, they had already been divided into ranks. In future, these two individuals will certainly become the pride of He family.

After the meal, He Yiming returned to his courtyard.

As he'd just entered, his brows suddenly creased and Internal Energy aroused. However, this was just momentarily before he completely relaxed.

He turned his body and respectfully said, "Grandfather, you came."

"En," He Wude's figure slowly walked out of the darkness. His vision on He Yiming had a trace of astonishment as he asked, "Yiming, how did you know I came?"

He Yiming slightly started, before scratching his head and saying:

"I heard the sound of your footsteps."

He Wude glanced at his feet while suspiciously thinking, "Could it be that I stepped on something heavy just now? Or that I am truly getting old..."

He gently sighed, revealing a slight solitary sort of expression.

He Yiming never expected that a casual line he randomly said would move the old man so much.

In truth, the reason he could detect the presence of the old man was not due to the latter's footsteps, but due to a sort of spiritual sense. This

feeling was a lot sharper compared to that of the ordinary people. Furthermore, it was purely Xiantian, far incomparable to what could be achieved through Houtian training.

He Wude faintly shook his head as well as that feeling before he said: "Yiming, how is your cultivation going?"

He Yiming promptly said: "Your grandson's cultivation is going good. Many thanks for grandfather's concern."

How could his cultivation not be going good? It was simply like a rocket, advancing by leaps and bound. However, no matter what, he could not tell the truth to the old man in front of him.

He Wude revealed a satisfied smile as he said: "I heard Quanyi saying that a few days ago, while training, you almost destroyed the entire training room?"

He Yiming's complexion turned a slight red before he said with a awkward laugh:

"Grandfather, that was an accident. Your grandson's control is not good for the time being."

He Wude heartily laughed for a moment, before waving his hand as he said:

"It's nothing. As long as you cultivate properly, not to mention the basement, even if you destroy my courtyard, that would be fine as well."

He Yiming's complexion turned even more red. If he were to truly destroy the grand courtyard, he feared that his old man would rush back the very next day and make him eat something he'd not eaten in a long time, the Bamboo Meat Slice. (Tl: It seems like Bamboo Meat Slice is meant to be a pun, but I have no idea.")

However, saying that he had not received a beating ever since attaining the fifth layer would not be false. Furthermore, after attaining the sixth layer, the attitude of family members towards him changed somewhat. As for after the seventh layer, not to mention a beating, the elders had not even said a harsh word to him.

He was slightly moved. This was the benefit of advancing. Although he was currently only fourteen years old, the treatment he received was not one bit less than his twenty-two years old eldest brother.

He Wude entered the room in big strides and casually sat down.

He Yiming hurriedly brew tea and respectfully stood in front of his grandfather.

He Wude spoke without beating around the bush:

"Yiming, this time, I am making you go with Quanxin, it won't influence your cultivation, will it?"

"It will not." He Yiming immediately said.

Indeed, taking his strange, inconceivable cultivation speed and situation into account, his cultivation couldn't possibly be influenced.

"Then, that's good," He Wude solemnly said, "Xu family will certainly provoke troubles. Moreover, I am certain that after your eldest uncle and eldest brother, they will pay attention to your performance."

He Yiming's both eyes shined as he said:

"Grandfather, you can be assured. I will not disappoint you."

He Wude laughed in a hoarse voice and patted on He Yiming's shoulder before saying:

"However, keep in mind to be extremely careful. If there is any danger, you must not stubbornly resist. It would be better to temporarily avoid the spear's end. There should be no mishaps."

"Yes." He Yiming said in a lowered voice, though he didn't agree in his mind. His grandfather was not aware of his true strength. If this was not the case, and the latter knew He Yiming was at the ninth layer, he would not have said these words.

After giving a few more instructions, He Wude finally said:

"Your eldest uncle's Internal Energy has already attained the peak of the ninth layer. Within the entire Tai Cang county, he is second only to me and that Xu family's old guy. On the basis of his strength and martial skill, he could undoubtedly be ranked third in the Tai Cang. If you feel you

couldn't deal with someone, just pass him to your eldest uncle. Remember, don't try to show off."

He Yiming heavily nodded, repeatedly urging that he would not lose big because of a small cause.

He Wude then finally departed. Within the third generation, he had the highest expectations of He Yiming. Even though he wished the latter to show his brilliance in the Cheng family's banquet, even more so, he didn't wish any danger to him. Faced with two such contradictory thoughts, the old man was sort of helpless.

The next day, He Quanxin left the Book Pavilion he'd always defended, and leading the few members of the third generation, left for the county town.

Both He family and Xu family had their main base outside the county town. However, the Cheng family was different, and their main force resided in the county town.

The Cheng family had deep-rooted power and influence in the county town, occupying three business. Even the position of the City Protector had been reserved for the Cheng family.

Cheng family was an influential family passed through several generations. In the history of the county, the protection of the county town had been assigned to the Cheng family more than eighty percent of times.

Therefore, even though the Cheng family was the most inferior in terms of the battle strength, in terms of authority, they were the strongest in the entire county town

Of course, being a desolate region, Tai Cang county was situated in an extremely ordinary corner of the Jadeting district. Furthermore, the county resided along the mountains, causing the local customs to be extremely fierce, which had been quite a headache for the higher officials.

Of course, the most important point was that the county had no speciality nor any opportunities of reaping profit. No outsider wished to be assigned here. The district had a sort of 'leave it be' policy towards Tai Cang county. As long as no power rebelled against the flag itself, district would leave the county to its own devices.

Therefore, in this special region, the power of authorities need not necessarily be comparable to the power and influence of the influential families.

Cheng family, in return, also never provoked Xu family and He family due to the lack of their battle power. As such, the three influential families maintained a subtle balance and tacit understanding.

Chapter 35 - County Town

The next day, the group had entered the county town. He Quanxin and his wife, who watched over He family's business in the town, came to greet them at the town.

Under the lead of He Quanxin, apart from He Yiming and the rest three, He Yilong had also followed.

He Yixuan, He Yiming, and He Yilong were the blood-related, direct descendants of He Quanming. Hence, upon meeting each other, both sides were naturally moved.

After settling down in the He family's Transaction House, He Quanxin immediately got to the point and asked about the Feast.

He Quanming had said a few words in reply when Lin Wenyu led He Yiming and the other two out of the hall into the room inside.

Looking at Lin Wenyu and the three siblings leave, He Quanxin deeply sighed and said:

"Second brother, sister-in-law has suffered."

He Quanming hesitated a little before slightly nodding, "Probably has."

To manage He family's business, He Quanming and his wife had no other choice but to leave the He family estate. According to the rules of the family, children after the age of five must leave their parents and live alone. However, if the couple lived in the manor, they could at least have seen their children everyday. However, living in the county town, they could hardly see their children a few times throughout the entire year.

This time, the Lord Master allowing He Yilong to join the group was undoubtedly allowing the entire family to gather together by taking the advantage of Cheng family's Banquet.

Hence, He Quanxin and He Quanyi also turned a blind eye to it.

Lin Wenyu although was not some mistress from a big family, in Tai Cang county, she was a pearl of a small family.

Lin family was also a martial clan that had its legacy. However, the clan members were very sparse, and by the time of Lin Weyu's generation, this legacy had already been cut off.

After she married He Quanxin, both husband and wife united themselves to push the He family to the top. In the process of He family founding their current footing, their contributions could not be overlooked.

Although Lin Wenyu's cultivation was inferior to He Quanxin's, she was still a cultivator who had attained the seventh layer's peak. If she did not have to give birth to the three siblings, she actually might not have been inferior to He Quanming.

Since she was meeting her children after so long, she was not aloof as usual. Although the three siblings had gradually grown up, in her eyes, they were undoubtedly still small.

"Mother, while coming to the town, big sister Ling asked me to bring some cosmetics and jewellery. Let's go and buy some." He Yilong said while softly pulling on her mother's hand.

Although the mother-daughter did not live together, they were even closer than many other mothers and daughters who always lived together.

Although the rules set by the Lord Master were rigid and bared emotions, they were not completely unreasonable.

Lin Wenyu softly stroked her daughter's hair and unhesitatingly said:

"Come, we will go right now," Subsequently, she raised her head and glanced at her two sons, "You two also rarely come to the county town. Come, roam with us a little."

He Yiming and his brother naturally did not have any objection. Perhaps Tai Cang county's county town was unknown in the district, but in their eyes, it was already a bustling place.

Having the temperament of youngster, He Yiming was filled with curiosity.

Casually talking along the way, the four individuals entered the most

bustling street of the town.

Lin Wenyu had been living here for several decades. She knew every street of this region like the back of her hand. Knowing that her sons and daughter rarely come here, she had naturally devised a proper route beforehand, so that they could enjoy as much as possible before returning.

The flourishing city broadened the horizons of He Yiming as expected. He Yixuan had visited the county a town a few times before, thus, his conduct was somewhat proper. However, this was the first time for He Yiming and He Yilong. They ogled all around throughout the entire way. For them, it was simply too much to take in.

Observing his sixth brother being so excited, He Yixuan suddenly asked:

"Yiming, you think this place is fun?"

"Of course, I think so," He Yiming said without giving it much thought. However, the next moment, he felt something amiss. Turning his head, he asked, "Third brother why did you ask such a question?"

He Yixuan slightly smiled and said:

"Sixth brother, you should know that although the main branch of the Cheng family are in the county town, anyone from their younger generation who hopes some achievements in cultivation is strictly prohibited to live in the town with the main family before the age of

twenty.”

He Yiming slightly started before asking:

“Then, where do they live?”

“In the countryside; with the nature and far away from the disturbances of mundane world.” He Yixuan said in a low voice.

He Yiming didn’t reply, seeming as if he was contemplating before he asked:

“Third brother, how do you know?”

“Two years ago, I went to that place with your eldest brother and second brother to have a skill competition with the third generation of Cheng family. Therefore, I know how they operate,” He Yixuan sighed before continuing, “Cheng family is a truly big clan. After attaining the five year mark, all the children are sent to that place for training. Several of them are eliminated every year, ultimately leaving behind the true elites.”

He Yiming’s brows slightly creased. He family’s history was too short and truly couldn’t be compared to these big, influential families who had the legacies passed on through hundreds of years.

“Third brother, what is the cultivation of Cheng family’s third generation?” He Yiming asked somewhat anxiously.

He Yixuan's face showed a faint, complacent smile as he said:

"Cheng family has a lot of members, however, their accomplishments are actually not much. Furthermore, no one has attained the seventh layer in their third generation. They are far incomparable to you and the eldest brother."

He Yiming then relaxed and recalled that attaining the seventh layer was no easy feat.

Within the three influential families, He Yitian was the only individual who was able to luckily make the breakthrough.

As for the rest, although those who had attained the sixth layer's peak were not a few, not of single of these had been able to cross the sixth layer's bottleneck.

As for He Yiming....

His situation was one of a kind, and mentioning him would be confusing two different things.

He Yixuan earnestly glanced at his younger brother beside him before saying:

"Yiming, currently, your cultivation is already not inferior to that of the eldest brother, and going by your age, your future prospects are even

more boundless. Therefore..." He moved his finger in a circle before continuing, "Although this place is extremely lively and prosperous, it does not suit you."

He Yiming heavily nodded before saying:

"Third brother, I understand," He softly said, "I will not disappoint the family."

His voice carried incomparable determination and confidence. Even He Yihai almost felt the aura emanated by his sixth brother was the same as his grandfather's.

Although he only felt as such momentarily, it was enough to make him apprehensive.

The truth was that since He Yiming's strength had already stepped beyond people's imagination, his words seemed naturally full of confidence and reason.

Since his words were the truth, his grandeur was far incomparable to ordinary people who couldn't be too certain about the future.

Although Lin Wenyu was chatting with her daughter in low voice, she was quite attentive of the two brothers as well. Upon hearing their conversation, her face showed a faint, gratified and complacent smile.

To have such sons, what more could she want?

A clamor could be heard distantly, followed by three drum strikes. Immediately, a lot of people rushed towards the sound.

He Yilong curiously asked:

"Mother, what's happening ahead?"

Lin Wenyu's expression turned solemn before she said:

"Ahead is the public arena of Tai Cang county. Some people have established the life and death contract, and are about to compete."

In Tian Luo country, martial arts was prevalent. Although the genuine primary-cultivation techniques were in the hands of influential families and some sects, several body strengthening techniques were quite widespread.

The people capable of practising the internal Energy cultivation were not much, however, people who had some knowledge of ordinary battle skills were quite a few.

In every city inside the Tian Luo country, at least one such arena had to be present.

These arenas were precisely made to provide a stage for people to compete in martial arts. The country itself had issued the law that everyone must sign a life and death contract, and after ascending onto

the stage, the life and death was to be decided by the heavens. No outsider could interfere. If one even killed the opponent on-stage, the former need not compensate.

Of course, apart from the life and death, it could also be used to test one's skill and exchange pointers. However, most of the people going up on the stage did so for the glory and spread their name in all four directions.

He Yixuan's eyes slightly shined as he said:

"Mother, you and Yilong can return first. Me and brother will go take a look."

Lin Wenyu slightly hesitated before softly sighing, "All right, but bear in mind: Don't go on the stage no matter what."

He Yixuan and He Yiming exchanged a glance and sounded their agreements at the same time. He Yilong, on the other hand, although was not willing to leave, how could she disobey Lin Wenyu. Half-pulled and half-dragged, she was taken away. Of course, as a mother, Lin Wenyu enticed her with all kinds of jewellery, ornaments... before ultimately convincing the little girl to delightedly leave.

Although everyone in the He family trained in martial arts, no one had much expectations from the exquisite sisters. In the minds of these men, they had to be the backbone of the family. As for the women, they were to be protected, and not the other way around.

Therefore, before going to the arena, all of them tacitly made He Yilong return. The two brothers, He Yiming and He Yixuan, were destined to step on the road of martial dao. Even if Lin Wenyu was not willing, she would not stop them from watching life and death battles on the stage.

After their mother and sister left, the two brothers nodded towards each other and dashed ahead.

Although a lot of people had already gathered ahead, making it difficult for them to move through, what sort of skill did these two possess? Softly waving their hands, they almost effortlessly opened up the crowd and entered.

Even though some people were discontent and deliberately knocked against them, the latter only felt themselves knocking against metal, and instead, they themselves felt a slight aching.

Then, everybody knew that although the age of these two was not much, they couldn't be belittled. Subsequently, no one dared to block them again, allowing them to smoothly move up to the centre.

